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# The View from Below: Constructing Agency under a Neoliberal Umbrella

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# The View from Below: Constructing Agency under a Neoliberal Umbrella

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# Dedication

For Kara, Giana and Nathan.  They know why.

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# The View from Below: Constructing Agency under a Neoliberal Umbrella

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Abstract

This dissertation starts from the proposition that globalization is a process of integration aided and abetted over centuries by technologies (e.g. transportation and today's electronic communications) that have collapsed time and space among individuals and enabled the projection of power. This dissertation excavates and analyzes what are termed *discourses of globalism*, the rhetorical construction of a social order that transcends the nation-state. The primary form of globalism at this juncture is neoliberal globalism, an elite discourse that is hostile to the nation-state and promotes a world that organizes individuals into global markets as producers and consumers. One of the defining tenets of neoliberal globalism is the assertion that "there is no alternative" to organizing society, a phrase made (in)famous by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the 1990s. The project is framed as a search for the emerging rhetorical strategies that might reconstruct agency (the capacity for individuals to affect the world) at a grassroots level under that umbrella of neoliberal globalism and at least contemplate an alternative organization of a more integrated global society. Methodologically, the dissertation employs Kenneth Burke's (1937) theory of discursive history as an interplay of acceptance and rejection frames over time. Using food talk, primarily Internet content

concerning food and agriculture, as a corpus of texts the dissertation charts neoliberal globalism as an acceptance frame and its impact on agency and equipment for living, the embedded social rules and roles for living in a social order. Using the concept of the rejection frame, the dissertation then argues that a grassroots globalism is nascent as seen in food talk and is attempting to counter neoliberal globalism through constructing a theory of rights that transcends the nation-state and provides a new form of equipment for living in a globally organized world. The dissertation concludes by theorizing this emerging rhetoric of rights as a step toward a rhetoric of global personal sovereignty that might unite people in all locales in a balancing of neoliberal globalism.

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## Chapter 1: *The Problem of Agency in a Globalizing World*

On August 13, 2001, French farmer Jose Bove returned to the site that launched him into international fame and infamy. The place was a McDonald's into which Bove previously had driven his tractor producing damage to the structure. On this particular day in 2001, he and others drove their tractors – without damaging the restaurant – to the McDonald's to once again protest globalizing forces symbolized by the fast food chain in the heart of a culture known for its gastronomic art. According to the Associated Press, about 70 police officers guarded the McDonald's that was closed "due to threats" according to a sign in the window. The AP continued:

> Bove and his allies pledged to continue their protest as long as necessary to gain support from the French government for farmers hit by a U.S. surcharge against Roquefort cheese, which is made in a nearby village.
>
> The protesters have targeted McDonald's as a symbol of how unchecked globalization can trample local culture – such as French cuisine.
>
> "We are the hostages of the World Trade Organization and the United States," Bove told protesters. "We won't leave until negotiations have begun with the French government" (Keaten 2001).[1]

While protesting over cheese might sound quintessentially French, this episode is an exemplar of something larger. The cheese is made in France, the symbolic location of the protest is a French outpost of a company based in Chicago and, according to Bove,

[1] Jamey Keaten, AP, August 13, 2001, accessed September 12, 2013, found on http://www.commondreams.org/headlines01/0813-01.htm

the real target of the complaint is an organization based in Washington, DC that claims the world as its bailiwick. The World Bank and the globalizing forces it represents have gone too far and are threatening the culture and livelihoods of dairy farmers and cheese makers, according to his claims. He has taken his concerns to the fast-food barricades rather than the ballot box in search of some power in the situation. In this case, his argument is with forces that transcend France and the French government – forces that are thus beyond his power of the vote. He is not alone.

In 2011, a band of people pitched tents in Liberty Square in Manhattan's financial district. The Occupy movement soon stretched around the globe. "Loosely coordinated demonstrations inspired by Occupy Wall Street [took] place in 951 cities in some 82 countries, according to organizers" (NPR October 20, 2011). The unofficial, yet "de facto" website of the movement, occupywallst.org, claims they are now in 100 cities in the US and 1,500 around the world. The movement's stated raison d'etre is a compendium of issues that cross borders.

> #ows [sic] is fighting back against the corrosive power of major banks and multinational corporations over the democratic process, and the role of Wall Street in creating an economic collapse that has caused the greatest recession in generations. The movement is inspired by popular uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, and aims to fight back against the richest 1% of people that are writing the rules of an unfair global economy that is foreclosing on our future (occupywallst.org/about).

The tools of changing this situation, based on the movement's actions, are not the ballot box or constitutional amendments but tents and cook stoves. The ballot box might be of little use when the issues in question involve "multinational" companies and an

"unfair global economy," both things that stretch well beyond the jurisdiction of even the US government's reach. The OWS members claim something has gone wrong that traditional nation-state tools give them no ability to influence.

These thumbnail sketches are exemplars of a problem this chapter will lay out in greater detail: The current state of globalization has created a discursive condition in the world, whereby the nation-state discourse of agency – the ability to affect the world – through citizenship has been undermined without the creation of a globalized successor. The current chapter and chapter two will discuss these forces in greater depth. Here, suffice to say that the forces in question reach beyond the nation states that provide the political tools – constructs such as one person, one vote – for individuals to conceive of affecting the world.

This project is a hunt for a globalized discourse of agency or at least its emerging building blocks. This chapter will look at 1) a brief history of globalization; 2) two case studies of the erosion of agency in the discourse of citizenship; and 3) a framework for pursuing this dissertation project.

Globalization is not new. It is a process that has arguably been underway since the first humans trudged out of Africa millennia ago. Yet, for something that is not new, we talk a great deal about globalization. It is a staple of political speeches, corporate websites, popular literature, religious pronouncements and other rhetorical phenomena. As Hirst and Thompson (2003) wrote, the word *globalization* has "mesmerized analysts and captured political imaginations" (Hirst and Thompson 2003 p. 98). Amidst this mass discussion, certain relatively new things attending globalization are of rhetorical interest.

Globalization is not a single thing, but at best a complex interaction of many tangible forces (e.g. transportation, capital flows, electronic communication) that provide numerous opportunities to reconceptualize the world around what Giddens called "the thesis that we now all live in one world" rather than territorialized sub-worlds demarcated by nation-state boundaries (Giddens 2003 p. 7). Even the globe-trotting imperial discourses of the colonial era presupposed political competition between colonial powers rooted in the Western nation-state system.

Before getting too far into a complex topic, it is worth pausing to define some key terms as they are used in this dissertation. Some of these terms can be used somewhat loosely in various contexts and can slide into one another in meaning. The arrangement of this brief glossary is a blend of alphabetical and logical.

*Agency*: Throughout this project, I use agency in the critical/cultural meaning of the term: the capacity for affecting the world. This project relies heavily on Kenneth Burke so right at the outset I want to avoid confusion with his definition of the term as referring to tools and capabilities. The two are not completely inconsistent but the distinctions could be troublesome. My use of the term goes beyond any tool and refers to the belief in one's ability to affect the world, what Cloud (2006) called "the capacity to mobilize critical consciousness" to shape events and take action in the world (Cloud 2006 p. 338), rather than the Burkean usage as a *means* or generative tool that can be wielded with purpose (Burke 1945 p. 275). The distinction between capacities and tools is an important one in a globalizing context. This dissertation makes much of the Internet as a communications medium for those without the structural power of the elite. It is an

agency by Burkean standards. However, it is a neutral tool, just as useful for spreading globalism from above as anything from below. Agency as a capacity to affect the world is something quite different. This type of agency is important in establishing the role of individuals in a system that goes beyond the nation-state. For instance, it is one of the core principles of Held's (2004) view of cosmopolitan citizenship.

> …human agency must be conceived as the ability to act otherwise – the ability not just to accept but to shape human community in the context of the choices of others. Active agency connotes the capacity of human beings to reason self-consciously, to be self-reflective and to be self-determining…Active agency is a capacity both to make and pursue claims and to have such claims made and pursued in relation to oneself. Each person has an equal interest in active agency or self-determination (Held 2004 p. 172).

Like Cloud, Held relies on the word "capacity" to describe the construct. In Held's context, agency is at the core of the ability to live actively in a world organized in a way that transcends the nation-state. It is also uniquely rhetorical in his construction as he specifically links it to making claims in a globalized context. So, unless specifically called-out otherwise, the term agency as used in this dissertation is used in this context rather than Burke's idea of a means to some purpose.

*Globalization*: This dissertation attempts to take care in using this term which is otherwise used widely and loosely in economic and political contexts. Throughout this project, I use *globalization* to denote a complex of forces that have played out through history. Those forces range from transportation to communications technology to capital flows and migration and well beyond. These are sometimes referred to as *globalizing forces*. This dissertation takes the position that globalization as an overarching process

encompassing these other forces is nothing new. At times, these forces intersect in important ways to create exigencies or changes in conditions; but this dissertation sees the Internet-driven post-Cold War environment as a period in this much larger historical process rather than the very definition of *globalization*.

*Globalism*: Throughout this project, I use *globalism* to denote rhetorical claims on the social organization of the world that gather adherents to the point of emerging as a transcontinental mode of discourse. This definition builds on Joseph Nye's (2002) use of the term as something that "seeks to describe and explain nothing more than a world which is characterized by networks of connections that span multi-continental distances" (Nye 2002).[2] In the current project, globalism is a discourse that simultaneously explains the world and shapes it to fit that explanation. In the taxonomy of this dissertation, *globalism* is a discursive apparatus constructed on top of the process of globalization aimed at constructing a social order.

*Globalism from Above*: Globalism is most often understood as something wielded instrumentally – from above. That is to say, globalism is often wielded by elites, institutions (e.g. The World Bank, The International Monetary Fund, United Nations, multi-national corporations) and other sources of power to arrange the goals and rules of engagement on this new playing field. In a complex world, more than one flavor of globalism should be possible. Globalism from above enjoys advantages in imposing its tenets on individuals and other organizations owing to the elite control of

[2] Nye has written extensively on globalization as the former head of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. This particular quote can be found at http://www.theglobalist.com/storyid.aspx?StoryId=2392.

communications channels and productive resources rather than any real debate about how to conceptualize and construct this one world. The *from above* designation indicates its top-down orientation to the world and the social order of a global society. Before addressing its obvious counterpart, globalism from below, this glossary will address the currently dominant discourse of globalism from above: neoliberalism.

*Neoliberalism*: Extensively explored in Chapter 2, *neoliberalism* is a currently dominant form of globalism from above. It emphasizes free markets on a global basis with all local resources assimilated into that market of free-flowing goods, services, capital and labor. It is what David Harvey called a "hegemonic…mode of discourse" promoting the ideology that "the social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach of market transactions, and [which] seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey, 2005 p. 3).

*Globalism from below*: Throughout this project, *globalism from below* denotes a grassroots-driven discourse organizing the social world on a global basis. This construct is not so widely recognized as either globalism from above or neoliberalism; but it can be glimpsed in such movements as the Occupy Wall Street and Slow Food movements. The crux of this project is to test the existence of such a discourse or establish some of its potential building blocks in the face of neoliberalism's hegemonic power.

Through various channels – the Internet most significantly but also including non-governmental organizations and forums such as the World Social Forum – non-elite people all over the world have an unprecedented ability to talk with one another and quite

often talk back to power. In essence, it is possible to witness the struggle over the reconceptualization of the world rather than posit it after the fact.

I will attempt to understand the construction of agency outside of a traditional nation-state frame that has provided the rhetorical resources for doing so for many decades. Later in this chapter, I will explicate the deterioration of agency's purchase within the nation-state frame – a deterioration that powered the protests noted at the outset of this chapter. Since globalization itself is nothing new, it is worth pausing to establish some backstory.

**A Brief History of Globalization with a Dollop of Food**

As I turn to reviewing a brief history of globalization, food necessarily enters the narrative. My ultimate aim is to use food talk as a site for arraying rhetorics of agency under a neoliberal umbrella. So, this section has two related goals: 1) to outline the processes of globalization in the modern era and the rise of neoliberalism; and 2) to demonstrate that globalizing forces have historically made food something worth talking about. The former aim establishes the contours of globalism from above as much of the history of globalization has been written by the machinations of large-scale power. The latter aim is to show that my use of food-related texts is not built on whimsy but a solid base of food's role in globalizing processes and an appropriate corpus of texts for understanding the reconstruction of agency. In form, I will begin this history with the Crusades, briefly, adding depth as I move forward in time.

The Crusades provide a reasonable starting point to consider globalization. Pan-European political and religious power combined to recruit military forces for several

waves of attack on Muslim powers in the Middle East. One product of this series of conflicts was a cultural exchange and expansion of trade. Waves of Europeans from several different strata of society experienced the goods and spices available in Middle Eastern markets situated at the end of the Silk Road trade route that extended from the eastern Mediterranean into present-day China. As these erstwhile fighters returned to Europe they carried a modicum of fine silks, a memory of flavorful food and a limited supply of the spices that would enliven what was, up to that point, a rather bland cuisine even in what we today consider culinary centers such as France. "The fashion for spicy food…seems to have been reintroduced to northern and western Europe by returning Crusaders, who, dazzled by the warmth and brilliance of the lands they had visited, carried a taste for new foods, as well as for many other luxuries, back to their native" lands (Tannahill 1988 p. 167). Spices became a "common currency, as negotiable as silver" (Tannahill 1988 p. 167). Global trade reached a new scale as the desire for these new commodities drove the rise of sea powers. Exploiting their geographic location in the eastern Mediterranean, traders in Genoa and Venice essentially taxed the rest of Europe for providing the sea routes from the eastern Mediterranean basin into Europe (Tannahill 1988 p. 168). This new level of competition, built not just on trade but on geographic choke points and the technology of transportation (mixtures of war ships and cargo ships designed for speed and hauling capacity, navigation tools etc.) gave rise to the age of exploration and, more importantly for present purposes, the colonial era.

The colonial era was marked by factors too numerous to detail here. I will focus on two that clearly set the stage for globalizing forces as they developed: the Columbian

Exchange and the 1648 treaties of Westphalia. These two systemic developments made globalization an explicitly European project. The Columbian Exchange, like the contemporary *globalization*, is a term that applies to a worldwide system with many moving parts that included the rise of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the worldwide proliferation of foodstuffs from the Americas while other crops and animals were brought to the Americas. "Columbus's 1492 voyage in search of a western passage to the Spice Islands began a fundamental transformation in the eating habits of all humans" (Pilcher 2006 p. 19). Slaves were growing sugar in South America and rice along the Carolina coast of what became the United States well before cotton became king in the antebellum southern US. Demonstrating globalization's impact on culture, European cultures evolved in rapid fashion based on these new foodstuffs. Colonial sugar production triumphed first as a delicacy among nobles and then became a staple among lower classes as continental tensions and economic developments curtailed wide distribution of honey. It was this period that carried the potato to Ireland and the tomato to Italy. In turn, traders carried these foods far and wide, taking the chili pepper to India to fire curries, for instance, establishing cultural conventions that seem foundational today but could not have existed without the Columbian Exchange (Pilcher 2006 p. 23). The Columbian Exchange grew so rapidly and so vast that European politics pioneered the chartered company, the archetype of which was the Dutch United East India Company (Pilcher 2006 p. 27). These companies blurred the lines between the sovereign, the military and capitalist economics.

Like the Columbian Exchange, the treaties of Westphalia so defined the world for so long that it's difficult to put them into historical context as a political product. "As idea, Westphalia refers to the state-centric character of world order premised on full participatory membership being accorded exclusively to territorially based sovereign states" (Falk 2002 p. 312). The treaties of Westphalia codified the nation-state system, the nature of sovereignty, international relations among sovereign states and the principle of complete rule over territories under control. These treaties propelled colonialism by displacing political and territorial competition – at least in theory – from the European continent to the rest of the world. Like any massive attempt to structure the world, intentions and operational realities were sometimes contradictory as Held wrote:

> To emphasize the development of the classic regime of sovereignty is not to deny, of course, that its reality was often messy, fraught, and compromised. But acknowledging the complexity of the historical reality should not lead one to ignore the structural and systematic shift that took place from the late sixteenth century in the principles underlying political order, and their often bloody reality. States struggled to contain and manage people, territories, and resources – a process exemplified both by European state formation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and by the rapid carving out of colonies by European powers in the nineteenth century (Held 2003 p. 163).

In essence, Westphalia institutionalized a way of thinking about the world within Western culture and legitimized its export to the rest of the world that still shows up in discursive units such as "community of nations," "world order" and the like. The subjugation of colonies throughout the world could be rationalized by taking the

responsibility of bringing them along until they were worthy of joining the community of nations – or, in other words, until they were European enough.

By placing the nation-state at the center of the world's organization, Westphalia also structured a way of thinking and talking about the world that is eroding in the present historical moment of globalization with high-speed communication, global markets and what Harvey called a *space-time compression* that makes many exigencies essentially happen everywhere at once, obsoleting Westphalia's presumption of territorial specification. As Scholte put it: " An era of large-scale globality does not allow a state – even the most highly endowed state – to exercise supreme, comprehensive, unqualified and exclusive rule over its territorial domain. Indeed, on many occasions transplanetary relations influence circumstances in a country without ever directly touching its soil (Scholte 2005 p. 189)." A certain Westphalian paradox exists in that the Westphalian system provided the protection and support capitalism and market economics required to flourish until it could no longer contain those forces (Strange 1999). While I make no claim that the nation-state is no longer relevant, globalizing conditions shift many things seemingly settled within the Westphalian system into a new *transnational* space with its own enablers and constraints. The discursive relevance of such shifts underlie works such as Fraser's *Scales of Justice* (2009) in which she argues that a new grammar of justice is required to conceptualize justice in a post-Westphalian world as well as Appadurai's invention of a language of "-scapes" to analyze a world where politics, economics and cultures are not territorially bounded (Appadurai 1996). The erosion of

Westphalian presumptions also has implications for agency which I will deal with in a moment.

Skipping forward from Westphalia a couple centuries, the post World War II Bretton-Woods agreements offer a descendant of the treaties of Westphalia that shaped the globalizing world and whose erosion and collapse aided in creating the current phase of globalization and neoliberalism. In July 1944, the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference was held in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, a location that ultimately lent its name to the conference and the resulting agreements in historical perspective. The Bretton Woods conference happened in the twin shadows of the war and the Depression that preceded it, a Depression US officials and elites did not want to revive as the nation demobilized from war, a fear so raw that it prompted the first internal thoughts on the post-war order to occur even as the US entered the conflict (Toussaint 2008 p. 9). The Bretton Woods agreements set up a system of fixed currency exchange rates centered on the US dollar (as an explicit proxy for the gold standard) and institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. "This system existed under the umbrella protection of US military power. Only the Soviet Union and the Cold War placed limits on its reach" (Harvey 205 p. 10).

Like the treaties of Westphalia, the Bretton Woods system papered over a large number of contradictions that only grew over time. The US dollar nominally became a global currency allowing the lending of dollars to European governments for rebuilding, with US companies eventually recovering many of those dollars through the rebuilding of Europe. The new institutions, seemingly quasi-neutral arms of the United Nations,

eventually tightened their relations with Wall Street, the City of London financiers and tacitly claimed independence even while voting rights were largely held by the US and British governments. While known today for strategic (and often disastrous) loans to the developing world, this practice started through a backdoor mechanism in the waning days of colonialism. European powers borrowed money to build infrastructure (e.g. ports, long-haul highways) in colonies that would make it easier to exploit their resources after withdrawal of the colonial power. Those debts were then imputed to the colonies as they gained independence (Toussaint 2008 pp. 22-23). The World Bank further insisted that to continue the practice of lending to emerging nations required that loans be spent to purchase products from the industrialized world. This requirement later metastasized into requirements to end import substitution policies of economic development and open up markets to foreign rivals against which developing nations could not possibly compete.

Agricultural development became one of many tools as the Bretton Woods institutions embraced and propelled neoliberalism. "Primary targets of this restructuring were debtors' agricultural sectors, which were to be reconfigured as hyperefficient, high-volume machines whose surpluses could be exported and whose earnings would help retire the debts" (Roberts 2008 p. 128). Agriculture's historic role as one of the first organized industries in any civilization made it a prime target for neoliberal restructuring in developing nations. Protections were rapidly dismantled and farmers were forced to fend for themselves in markets already dominated by Western nations who benefited from government subsidies – outlawed in the developing world as a condition of development – that produced an overproduction of grains and other commodities that

flooded newly opened global markets. As disastrous as these early efforts toward an economic globalization were for developing nations, they provided impetus and exploitable frameworks as globalized capital began reshaping global conditions free of governmental constraints.

Harvey noted that the Bretton Woods period – which collapsed in the 1970s – contained some positives among its many contradictions. "Fiscal and monetary policies usually dubbed 'Keynesian' were widely deployed to dampen business cycles and to ensure reasonably full employment. A 'class compromise' between capital and labour [sic] was generally advocated as the key guarantor of domestic peace and tranquility" (Harvey 2005 p. 10). This uneasy compromise was assailed in the 1970s as numerous shocks to the global system – shocks centered in the West yet global in scope – occurred such as the Arab oil embargo, the flooding of the world financial system with petro-dollars (Harvey 2005 p. x), economic stagflation in the US and Britain, the recovery of the German and Japanese manufacturing bases and an evolution in Western Cold War strategy that emphasized an ecosystem of capital-friendly states under the banner of "freedom" via a narrow free enterprise definition.

Bretton-Woods as a world order collapsed in the 1970s, producing the odd result of empowering the Bretton Woods institutions to begin pursuing their own agendas in concert with global capital without the constraints of the Bretton Woods system. The history lesson cannot come to a close without briefly mentioning the Cold War and, more importantly for my purposes here, the invention of the Internet. The Internet was born in the midst of the Cold War as a communication network with no central switches, unlike

AT&T's telephone network that was centrally switched in Kansas City, Missouri. The Internet's role in globalization is multifaceted. It is used for commerce and other agendas of capital, certainly. It enabled the tightening of the networks through which capital flows around the world and sped the information that traders use for market moves.

But, the Internet also offers a new mode and scale of interaction open to those operating from below (Held et al 2002 p. 71). The Internet and its leading tools (e.g. Twitter, Facebook) have been implicated in toppling governments and organizing resistance movements on a global basis, such as the global Occupy movement that stretched around the globe. The Internet provides a mechanism by which individuals from around the world can talk to one another and to power. This mode of interaction allows the exchange of symbols and other rhetorical resources across cultures, politics, movements and – consistent with Harvey's notion of space-time compression – generally speeds up the velocity of those exchanges. To the degree the symbol exchanges become regularized in these interaction modes, new discourses such as a globalism from below can take shape on a global basis.

The end of the Cold War is no less important and is the end of this history review. As Harvey indicated, the Cold War disciplined numerous forces either constraining them directly or channeling them into specific directions. The end of the Cold War accelerated globalization as many forces (e.g. multi-national corporations) broke free from the nation-state system. Despite existing since the 1960s, the Internet moved from a military realm to powering the Netscape IPO in just a few years. In this time, the term "Washington Consensus" also started circulating as a trope for a set of policies (e.g. open

capital markets, privatization etc.) enforced by the IMF on Latin American nations that eventually precipitated debt crises (Stiglitz 2003 pp. 6-7).

I close this history section here not because the Bush and Obama years had no impact, but because the progression already outlined sets the stage for globalism from above. Neoliberalism, a consolidated ideology of globalism from above, casts a long shadow in the literature and creates the struggle for agency at issue in this project.

The historical connections of Westphalia and the rise of liberal democracy produced a widely distributed set of rhetorical resources for constructing identity and agency articulated within the discourse of citizenship within the nation-state organization of the world. In liberal democracy, identity and agency are bound together. The citizen affects the world through his or her status as citizen and the rights and privileges that come with that status. We rely on these rhetorical resources to organize ourselves into the world as beings with the capacity to affect the world. Yet, at this particular point in the history of globalization, the linkage between these rhetorical resources – words such as *citizen* or *vote* – and their actual power to affect the world or clearly describe relations has eroded. To demonstrate this erosion and the confusion it creates, I offer two case studies.

**Agency within the Nation-State Framework**

My first case study involves the confounding of how the term *citizen* bestows agency at this juncture in globalization. I rely on the American situation in this study because it is the one I am most familiar with and as the archetypal democracy the US experience is instructive. I do not mean to side step the issue that full citizenship and

agency has historically been denied to various groups within the American system. These discursive elements, however, still existed as rhetorical resources and, indeed, civil rights movements have relied on their common meanings to argue for their positions and for the agency those rights imbue.

The term *citizen* is an ideograph, McGee's (1992) construct that describes terms that command great power by collapsing mythology and ideology into a circulating discursive unit.[3] Here, I want to parse the ideology and the mythology to sharpen my focus on mythology in the waning purchase of citizenship discourse. The identity inherent in the ideograph *citizen* is increasingly problematic. Speaking loudly are conservatives and at first blush the culprit might appear to be conservative discourse. I will address some of that discourse here, but my contention is that something more profound than a rising chorus of right wing extremists is afoot. My claim is that globalizing conditions that unsettle nation-state boundaries are also de-territorializing the identity-defining meaning of *citizen* and its permutations such as *citizenship* or even "we the people" to borrow from the US Constitution. Said differently, the Left/Right split in American politics obscures a profound agreement that we must *re*-mythologize our primary identity and agency terms in a world with porous borders where lines were once solid. The very real problem is that to do so requires agreement first on what aspects of the existing mythology to reinscribe for a new era. Thus, various fragments of that

[3] The construct of the ideograph provides great texture for appreciating citizenship discourse. The combination of mythology and ideology blurring into fact sheds great light on how disparate people from disparate places came to view themselves as consubstantial on American soil.

mythology are vying with one another to reshape consubstantiality and who has agency in a globalizing world.

It is worth recalling that citizenship is a discursively-produced identity to mark a democratic nation-state era. In his famous analysis of American democracy, aptly titled *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville (trans. 2000) devoted an early, lengthy chapter to the "dogma of popular sovereignty" in America (Tocqueville, 2000, p. 53). Curiously, de Tocqueville never fully defined the term "dogma" in his usage but it signals something less than tangible fact and suggests a circulating rhetoric that people might rely upon without interrogating its substance or rhetorical nature. Popular sovereignty – or the identity of the *citizen* – was a necessary innovation to mark a break with the *subjecthood* identity of a monarchic past. It was a symbolic rebirth of identity that served to discursively bestow an agency that did not previously exist.

In roughly the same timeframe, Marx (trans. 1992) was far more blunt than the French thinker. Marx identified citizenship as a discursive fiction and citizens themselves as characters in the democratic narrative. "In the state…[man] is the imaginary member of a fictitious sovereignty, he is divested of his real individual life and filled with an unreal universality." (Marx, "On the Jewish Question", p. 220) The citizen is an illusion, a fiction, according to Marx. These discursive constructs – to pivot from Marx's *fiction* term[4] – were necessary to flesh out the role of human beings in a time of changing conditions and reformulations of power with the rise of the bourgeoisie. To

[4] Marx also referred to the citizen as a "sophistry" elsewhere in "On the Jewish Question" by which I infer that he intended to speak in rhetorical terms.

avoid unnecessary conflict, the discourse was made available to all. By rhetorically distributing equality to all, Marx argued, the nation-state papered over social distinctions and inequalities, but did not do away with them. The nation-state simply absolved itself of any role in dealing with those social issues. The citizen was free to contend for a voice in civil society.

The discursive nature of citizenship underpins many other works too numerous to deal with here.[5] Suffice to say that *citizen* is the primary identity term of a nation-state era. The term denotes an identity in the world that is constructed with clear lines of consubstantiality and agency distributed among those that fit the identity. Yet, this ideographic term is being affected by globalizing conditions. For instance, in the U.S. a debate has erupted over "birthright citizenship" and the meaning of the 14th amendment to the US Constitution, an effort described by the *New York Times* as "an effort to redefine what it means to be an American" (Lacey, January 4, 2011).

This struggle over contested meanings is an outgrowth of what the United Nations has called "a new migration era" (UN 2006) characterized by the rise of transnational communities and the roaming ways of literally hundreds of millions of people – some through choice, some through economic desperation, some legal and some illegal, and some through forced refugee status. In the US, the "birthright citizenship" debate is also connected to age-old concerns over the Mexican border, economic impacts from immigration (both real and imagined, positive and negative), racism at its extremes and

[5] A partial list would include: Andersen's *Imagined Communities* (1991), Schudson's *The Good Citizen* (1998), Walzer's *Spheres of Justice* (1983).

likely a host of other issues I do not intend to dwell on here. My focus is on a general rejection of nation-state borders as the basis of defining identity, a rejection that can be found in many forms among diverse groups.

This sense of contested meanings is an example of what Burke described as the "splintering" or fragmentation of frames of meaning at times of changing conditions (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 101). The meaning of citizenship has shattered and various shards are vying to reorganize who is and is not consubstantial under globalizing conditions. This shattering and reorganization also applies to ideographs and McGee's development of the construct. For instance, Giddens argued that globalization played havoc with the "internal claims to truth" (Giddens, 2003, p. 43) of established rituals, customs and practices simply by demonstrating that there are other ways to do things, thus calling into question the lines between truth and custom, fact and rhetorically-produced conceits. In the case of "birthright citizenship," globalization simultaneously provokes a defense of established mythology, ideology and fact *and* a questioning of those very things as alternatives surface.

At the center of one layer of this debate are babies, children born into US citizenship to mothers who have entered the nation illegally. Since the 14th Amendment was adopted in 1866, American law has been quite clear that citizenship was a birthright owed to anyone born within the physical borders of the United States. While some claim that the amendment was only aimed at enfranchising former slaves, it was tested in persuasive terms in the 1898 case of United States v. Wong Kim Ark. That case not only involved the child of an immigrant, but the child of immigrants who were specifically

excluded from citizenship by xenophobic laws targeting Chinese immigrants at the time. The US Supreme Court, however, found that "where birth in the United States was clear" the child in question was "definitely a citizen" (Lee, CRS Report 2005, p. 8). Citizenship in this time of change after the Civil War was rooted in a grammar produced by the shared conditions of birth within the territorially-bounded American nation-state.

Yet, globalization troubles territorial distinctions. In this debate, some argue that to defend traditional meanings of citizenship, we must redefine it in a way consistent with a world of porous borders. "We're just saying it takes more than walking across the border to become an American citizen. It's what's in our souls" according to California's U.S. Representative Duncan Hunter (Lacey January 4, 2011). Hunter and many like him remove the nation-state boundary as a consideration in defining a "citizen" while at the same time claiming to defend that border's integrity. The rhetorical move attempts to reformulate identity due to globalizing conditions. Said another way, globalizing conditions have placed a new constraint on even conservative views of traditional citizenship. Territorial claims are insufficient, Hunter argues, to construct a citizen. The settled arguments of the past – and the 14th Amendment – are not sufficient to guide us in this moment of change. Ironically in this case, one argument raised by those who seek to revoke the 14th Amendment's provisions of birthright citizenship is that the US is in the minority of nations in the world who grant citizenship on this physical basis, rather than a strict extension of parental status. In other words, a globalized world is used as a rhetorical resource to redefine American citizenship in the face of a world with porous borders.

To further complicate the situation, the entire grammar of citizenship is shifting because of globalizing conditions. Hunter's argument is powered by an agent-centered grammar rather than a scenic grammar that invokes borders. The agents in question here are constructed as "anchor babies" born with a nefarious intent to legalize illegal immigrants through the immigration code's provisions for unifying families (see FAIRUS.org for one example of this claim).[6] The scene of birth is not the determining factor of identity. Rather, there is something about the agent – the "anchor baby" – that is determinative of distributing membership in the community. This grammatical shift is a powerful one, enabling rhetors to deny that place calls a certain type of person into being. Rather, through this agent-centered grammar, rhetors are able to make several moves at once – all consistent with Burke's discussion of motivations underlying agent-centric grammar (Burke, 1945/1969, pp. 172-195): remove the infant from its context as being born in the territory of the United States so that it might be considered as a thing in itself (transcendence); assign motives to this child stripped of context, such as pulling illegal immigrants into the nation (idealization); and invoke an idealistic rhetoric of constitution that, in this instance, has potential legislative outcomes resulting in a move to rewrite the Constitution's 14th Amendment. This last move is consistent with Burke's observation that such documents are constantly under pressure to accommodate new terms that act as "amendments" whether or not they are enacted into the Constitution (Burke, 1945/1969, p.175) precisely because they shape thought.

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[6] In fairness to these children, the accusation is at the hairy edge of plausibility. The immigration code does not allow them to petition for family unification until they are *anchor-twenty-one-year*-olds rather than babies, according to Section 201 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

While the right wing of American politics no doubt speaks quite loudly on this issue, they are not the only ones de-emphasizing the border in creating consubstantiality and the politics of distributing equality and political agency. Others supporting undocumented immigrants draw on different aspects of the mythology of the citizen to construct a citizen in a world with porous borders. At this writing, the DREAM Act failed to pass the US Congress, aiming to offer a path to citizenship to undocumented immigrants who came to the country as children with undocumented parents. While "DREAM" is an acronym of the Act's formal title, it unabashedly draws on the *American dream* as an ideograph of American citizenship. Undocumented young people supporting the Act call themselves "dreamers" to lay claim to the American dream as an argument to construct their own identity. Like Hunter and those on the other side of this issue, dreamers argue citizenship as something that is "in our souls" rather than dependent on nation-state borders. These apparently opposing arguments are driven by a rhetorical homology, Brummett's (2006) critical tool for understanding disparate texts as energized by a common discursive unit. Both are constructed from a common call for a new mythology to determine the meaning of the "citizen" in a globalizing world.

As if this situation were not complicated enough, the Obama Administration conjures yet another deterritorialized argument in its support of the DREAM Act. Yet, this one eerily relies on an argument that might be characterized as an increasing need for biopower in a globalizing world. The DREAM Act is worth supporting, according to the White House website, because these young people can serve in the military, and contribute to America's competitive position "in today's global economy" (Miranda,

White House Blog, December 2010). While the White House claim is arguably the most respectful of the nation-state organization of the world of those texts surveyed thus far in this section, it reduces consubstantiality to a common pool of biopower to fuel global combat in different forms. The argument confounds the 14th Amendment's history (enfranchising slaves that provided the biopower of the American South) and it is certainly not the image called forth by dreamers. In effect, it negates identity and agency even as it argues for some privileges of citizenship. It is ironic, indeed, that such an argument is propounded by the White House of the first African-American president, a man who cannot seem to shake the conspiracy theory that his own transnational background is indicative of someone who is not actually a US citizen and therefore ineligible for the nation's highest elective office.

Yet, there is a certain rhetorical pragmatism undergirding the White House position, a pragmatism that animates yet another strain of rhetoric that disorients the citizen. This rhetorical fragmentation of citizenship is accompanied by a stretching of the construct to a planetary status. It is a use of the available nation-state grammar to construct a sense of belonging in a world that transcends the nation-state.

Some have attempted to stretch the ideograph of citizenship beyond the nation-state through such grammatical units as "global citizenship" (Held 2004) or "cosmopolitan" citizenship (Went 2004). Yet, by relying on a nation-state grammar, these theorists must simultaneously postulate the creation of global institutions and governing layers to secure citizenship – institutions and layers that largely do not exist. Citizenship discourse provides the available terms for imagining a global community or

securing a place in the world for every human being. So, this "expansion" of the established discourse (Held, Covenant, p. 10) is a necessary move to empower individuals to conceive of themselves as possessing agency within a globally-conceived order (Held, Covenant, p. 176). Or, in Tocquevillean terms, global or cosmopolitan citizenship stretches the *dogma of personal sovereignty* beyond the nation-state order in which it was conceived.

Yet, by doing so, the *citizen* is set adrift on a planet that has not produced the institutions or layers of governance instantiated by citizenship discourse. Such locutions merely poach a familiar word from an established discourse and rely on its familiarity to carry a conceptual argument beyond the nation-state without the power to drag the structures of rights with them. They do not provide a basis for constructing agency on a global basis even as they wield less real power within the nation-state. Being a French citizen did not give Jose Bove the capacity to change the system in which he and his fellow farmers toil. However, claiming to be a global citizen would not imbue him with that capacity either.

**A Widening Gap: Agency Terms and Globalizing Conditions**

My second case study concerns a foundational construct of liberal democracy and the capacity to affect the world. Political theorist Robert Dahl (1998) claimed that "voting equality" was a required phenomenon for any polity to be governed by a democratic process. "When the moment arrives at which the decision about policy will finally be made, every member must have an equal and effective opportunity to vote, and all votes must be counted as equal" (Dahl, 1998, p. 37). The explanation is definitional,

widely taught in elementary civics classes and is itself an example of the ideographic nature of the vote.

Michael Walzer (1983) wrote that the vote is a means of distributing equality in the "one man/one vote" mode. "The vote is important…because it serves both to symbolize membership and to give it concrete meaning (Walzer, 1983, p. 305)." So, Dahl's "voting equality" metric for understanding democratic society and its procedures actually rests on this symbolic distribution of political equality – a distribution bound up in the mythology attending *vote* as an ideograph of citizenship discourse. The symbolism is the more fundamental layer of meaning.

Yet, globalization is troubling the practice, the theory and the meaning of voting as a means of affecting the world. Habermas noted the growing gap between the vote and supranational structures such as the European Union or the World Trade Organization, both products of globalizing conditions. While the vote remains a creature of nation-state citizenship, globalization is undermining the democratic conceit of a "society which *acts upon itself*" (Habermas, 2006, p. 74, emphasis in original). Globalization, according to Habermas, thus engenders a legitimation crisis whereby the vote as a symbol of the agency of citizenship is insufficient to alter the conditions shaping the society. From two different directions, this set of scholars has charted the unwiring of the ideograph from the structure it instantiates. The vote as a rhetorical element symbolizing the agency of citizenship is slipping out of alignment with the conditions of a globalizing world.

Emerging research among political science and political communication scholars describes a linkage between globalization and voting behavior – a linkage that undermines Dahl's proclamation. Hellwig (2001) started this process with a transnational study of links among national voting behavior, levels of global economic integration and perceptions of government economic accountability. Essentially, he found that greater levels of integration into the global economy corresponded to a view among voters that government was constrained in its ability to maneuver economically and thus could not be held accountable at the ballot box for the state of the economy. This globalization thesis opened the electorate to considering new ideas of government's role in domestic life during the election cycle since gross economic conditions were beyond control; thus economic policy is not a valid criterion for assessing good governance. Said differently, Hellwig discovered a tangible change in *the vote* attributable to globalizing conditions – and a construction of agency that is consistent with Harvey's view of neoliberal discourse and the construction of the neoliberal state:

> More fundamentally, however, the results suggest that globalization's reach in industrial democracies imprints not only domestic economic and social policies, but the attitudes of mass publics as well. The importance of this study's findings is bolstered by a consideration of the permanence of globalization. Unlike political institutions, which are subject to change by domestic actors and election outcomes, slowing or reversing trends toward greater economic interdependence is likely beyond the purview of any single government. As electorates increase their understanding of the many constraints their governments face – from both below and above – the link between domestic economic conditions and election outcomes becomes tenuous (Hellwig, 2001, p. 1160, emphasis added).

Hellwig theorized a growing realization that governments could not be held accountable for economic policy when the nation-state was increasingly residing within a larger global economy that constrained government's policy-setting function vis-à-vis economic conditions. In the above passage, Hellwig suggested that his research found voters contemplating that the very nature of what they were voting for or against was changing because of globalization's truncating effect on room to maneuver in policy-making and ultimately a constraint on a traditional democratic construct. Further, he suggested that this change was not transitory but reflected a new condition of the world. This attitudinal shift aligns with a change in voting behavior and the sense of democratic agency that voters take into the voting booth. In essence, Hellwig is quantitatively documenting the narrowing purchase of *the vote* as an ideograph of citizenship discourse.

In reviewing a broad swath of follow-up studies, Kayser (2007) asserted that Hellwig's findings have been largely affirmed and expanded in different directions. "Globalization, it appears, may be altering one of the most fundamental processes by which citizens influence government in democracies (Kayser, 2007, p. 349)."

As the vote's ability to symbolize political equality and popular sovereignty slips in the current milieu, a battle has erupted to fill that symbolic void within the circumference of the nation-state. Organizations new and old across America have adopted names and slogans that combine the language unit "the vote" with a verb indicating that something has gone wrong with the nation-state and this malfunction is a threat to citizenship, gun rights, computer programming conventions, immortal souls and other constructs.

- **Trigger the Vote**: A National Rifle Association organ, complete with a web video from actor/karate champion/former Texas Ranger portrayer Chuck Norris, aimed at registering voters who know that the vote has been used against them to eventually abolish the Second Amendment to the US Constitution. The problem here is that the vote has been hijacked by gun control authoritarians bent on taking away the rights of citizenship. Those authoritarians often include the United Nations.
- **Trust the Vote**: A group of Open Source Software computer programmers who maintain that fears over voting machines skewing election results can be addressed by using their programming conventions. The problem is that the voting process is potentially corrupted by technology, but technology can also provide the salvation.
- **Redeem the Vote**: Evangelicals aimed at registering young Christians who can restore the society to the right path. Here, the problem with the vote is that it has become corrupted with an *original sin* of sorts related to free will.
- **Enlighten the Vote**: Atheists promote the interests of electing atheists. Here, the problem is that the vote has been corrupted by people of faith.

- **Video the Vote**: Citizen journalists organize to video acts of vote suppression across the country. The problem with the vote is that it is suppressed through a right-wing conspiracy.
- **Grind the Vote**: Sex workers unite to promote their rights as full citizens. Here, the problem with the vote is that it is not inclusive enough of economic rights in a globalizing milieu.

This list represents a motley crew and it is not intended to be all-inclusive. That said, this list hopefully makes two parallel points: 1) various types of people perceive a problem in the *meaning* of the vote at this juncture, though they might blame many different people or forces for those problems; and 2) the symbolic content of the vote is up for grabs at this moment as various rhetors attempt to casuistically extend their larger discourses of identity and world organization into that symbolic void. To the degree agency is involved, it is an agency of division rather than equality.

Globalization, as a condition of the world, arrays all these discursive threads as various rhetorical efforts to capture the symbolic value of an ideograph of citizenship discourse that enables less agency under globalizing conditions. Voter identification bills passed by various state legislatures (including my own Texas at this writing) are products at least in part of this unraveling of the agency invested in the term, attempts to repair the symbolism and the process the ideograph evokes.

Other agency terms such as freedom of speech and freedom of association are at issue. For instance, the recent US Supreme Court decision *Citizens United vs. Federal*

*Election Commission 2010* hinged on the question of where agency lay. The Court's decision relied on the stretching of the individual freedom of association to extend speech rights from individuals to corporations as "associations of citizens" (US Supreme Court, Citizens United, p. 38) that can wield dollars to influence American politics. The decision is an emotional one for many reasons in the Left/Right divide of current American politics. Yet, the Court tacitly admitted that something is changing that drives the need to re-think what these agencies have meant. The Court set aside precedent with this decision. The Court also noted that "Our Nation's [sic] speech dynamic is changing" and that "[o]n certain topics corporations may possess valuable expertise" that allows them to correct errors in the speech of others. In full disclosure, the Court did not directly address globalization, other than including the Internet in its description of a changing world.

Even so, a transcendent rhetoric animates the Court's writing. The agency of citizenship moves upward into associations of citizens and the entities they create. Yet, it is not the Elk's Lodge or Putnam's (2000) beloved bowling leagues being enfranchised here. Those are localized entities. In *Citizens*, the Court specifically expanded the scope of this agency to corporations, actors adept at striding a globalizing world, speaking on those issues that cross borders. What's more, this agency is specifically invested in this global entity so as to trump the dogma of popular sovereignty. The Court ruled that corporations bore no need to reflect the will of its individual members when exercising this citizenship agency. Said differently, the agency of corporations is disassociated from the voice of any individual member of the association (employees or shareholders).

Corporations can wield theoretically commonly held capital against the opinions of individual members even though those members might well be severed from the collective entity if they did the same.[7] The tradeoff is that "freedom of speech" is stretched to an entity with the scale and complexity to match a globalizing world and provide a counterweight in the public sphere to those speaking on issues that might be beyond their reach, though not beyond that of a multinational company.

At the same time, "rights talk" as we have come to know it in the U.S. is undergoing a splintering of meaning. Rights (and the agency they confer) rhetorically confound one another as the circumference shifts to a globalized world. The defense of Second Amendment gun rights gets even louder as it grows a new rhetoric of fear from global forces in the form of the United Nations. The desire for security attenuates the way we talk about the Fourth Amendment. Agency loses out in certain spaces such as outposts of global transportation where the Fourth Amendment no longer applies and "rights talk" has been replaced with a pragmatic rhetoric of inconvenience and security. The absolutist rhetoric of "rights talk" (Glendon 1993) is undermined by new struggles over religious rights, sharia law, women's rights and similar issues. The US has had versions of these struggles before (for instance, during a wave of Catholic migration), but those battles were fought within the circumference of the nation-state where the underlying pressure to sublimate differences and assimilate proved a powerful force over time. Global conditions – global communications media, transnational communities, UN

[7] The colloquial term is "fired" but I suppose it's possible that other forms of separation apply in different collectives, such as shunning.

influence, the commoditization of culture – set a new landscape that confounds the meanings settled in a nation-state paradigm.

**A Discursive Condition**

We exist in what Habermas (2006) described as a "time of transitions," what Appadurai (1996) called a "disjuncture in societal relations" and what *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman (2007) has described as a *flattening of the world*. These various definitions tend toward the structural exigencies produced by various forces including neoliberalism as a dominant globalism from above.

The language of agency derived from the nation-state organization of the world still circulates. It is what Tomlinson called "the most spectacularly successful modern mode of orchestrating belonging" (Tomlinson 2003 p. 274). However, as seen in the case studies and the plights of Jose Bove and the Occupy movement, the discourse of citizenship is increasingly decoupled from any real capacity to construct agency in our globalizing moment where the relevant shaping conditions extend well beyond the nation-state. This is a discursive condition in the world worth studying, with an eye to how individuals might adapt to globalization and develop rhetorical strategies for constructing agency on a global basis outside the nation-state.

To say that globalization has produced a discursive condition of the world is to say that the numerous forces that combine under the term "globalization" have created an exigency that demands a change in the way we talk about the world. To unpack this notion, I will draw on Harvey's related concept of the *Condition of Post Modernity* (Harvey 1990) and Burke's discursive theory of history emerging in *Permanence and*

*Change* (Burke 1935/1954) and developed in *Attitudes Toward History* (Burke 1937/1984). Harvey critiqued the rise of "post-modern" discourse embodied in everything from philosophical tracts to architecture and the cultural aestheticization of value systems as a condition built upon several forces. Foremost among those forces is the compression of space and time driven by a post-1960s acceleration of capital accumulation on a global scale. He wrote:

> I mean to signal by [space-time compression] processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves. I use the word 'compression' because a strong case can be made that the history of capitalism has been characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us (Harvey 1990 p. 240).

So, this historical force hit a certain breakpoint, what Harvey called a "sea-change" in summarizing his argument (Harvey 1990 p. *vii*), which altered the world in such a way that previous modes of talking about the world no longer matched the objective qualities of the world. Continuing this theme in a far-reaching analysis of neoliberalism (which will be cited extensively in Chapter 2), Harvey argued that these effects of a globalizing world undermined existing social solidarities driving people to reorganize the social world in numerous ways (Harvey 2005 pp. 80-81).

While not invoking Burke, Harvey's analysis echoed Burke's discursive theory of history as laid out in *Attitudes Toward History* (1937/1984). This sense of contested meanings is an example of what Burke described as the "splintering" or fragmentation of frames of meaning at times of changing conditions (Burke, 1937/1984, p. 101). Burke

argued that discursive frames that organize the social world stretched to encompass changing conditions until they reached the same type of breakpoint that Harvey described. Drawing on Burke and other popular culture scholars, yet channeling Harvey, Brummett (2008) proposed that in the 21st century global capitalism has so changed the underlying conditions of the social world that a new articulated rhetoric built on *style* had emerged as "the transcendent ground in which the social is formed in late capitalism" (Brummett 2008 p. 3). One need not completely accept Brummett's theoretical contention to appreciate the linkage between material conditions and their impact on how we talk about the world and the adequacy (or, more pointedly, the *in*adequacy) of established rhetorical resources for constructing the social world.

Globalism, then, is a way of talking about the world that impacts a host of rhetorical constructs such as: what counts as knowledge, how power is negotiated, how one conceives of acting in the world, the construction of agency, the formation of solidarities and many other constructs. Fairclough (2006) obliquely addressed this relationship between conditions and discourse when he wrote: "Globalization is in part a discursive process, involving genres and discourses. It is easy to confuse actual processes of globalization with discourses of globalization, and it is important to distinguish the two" (Fairclough, 2006, p. 13). In the lexicon of this project, globalism is what Fairclough termed "discourses of globalization."

Such *sea-change* conditions emerged in the past and no doubt will continue to do so in the future. In this moment of history, neoliberalism has emerged as a form of globalism from above that is widely distributed and aimed at organizing the world into

markets and changing the nature of the nation-state from a guarantor of rights and freedoms to a market administration zone. Neoliberalism's rapid spread – both as a way of describing the world rhetorically and the processes and structures that operationalize its ideology – in the last 20 years has thrown open certain settlements forged in the nation-state system as issues of economics, culture, problem recognition and solution have escaped the nation-state system. While I hope to show that there is much yet to contest, such as the construction of agency, neoliberalism's hegemonic position as a dominant globalism from above creates an umbrella under which any other effort to describe the world must struggle to establish itself. What does that umbrella do to individual agency? What is happening underneath that umbrella to reconstruct agency at a grassroots level – a globalism from below?

I hope to understand the interplay of discourses from above and below in the production of agency and the rhetorical resources from which it is constructed. Toward that end, I hope to contribute to the expansion of rhetorical studies through a partnership with food studies, selecting texts that are produced by people talking about food – global food systems, cultural texts, protests over neoliberal food policies – and demonstrate a method of studying discourses of globalism through texts that array globalism from above and voices from below. By no means do I claim that food talk is the only category of texts that displays this ability to array discourses, but simply that food talk shows the model at work.

**The Project**

I begin with two guiding parameters: 1) focusing on those who recognize the existence of a globalism from above, by whatever construction; and 2) pragmatically, the need to focus on those with some level of access to the public sphere, either individually or collectively. Logically, there is no struggle without the first parameter. This understanding of globalism from above ironically creates the condition for what Harvey called a rejection of neoliberal values and a refraction of a different set of values back onto the heart of neoliberalism (Harvey 2005 p. 206). On the second parameter, I am looking largely to the Internet for texts. So, by definition, only those with some level of access will be directly represented. This is a structural issue to be acknowledged. This knowing selection of texts is within Hart's view of rhetorical criticism as an understood sampling of texts with a tight focus so that a given text can tell a story "larger than itself" (Hart 1997 p. 25).

Against that backdrop, the overarching questions this dissertation hopes to answer are: What are the rhetorical strategies to:

- Construct agency in a world being organized from above
- Create the basis of a globalism from below

At the outset, my assumption was that I would catch a work in progress rather than a discourse fully formed since a fully formed discourse would be either readily identified or so much a part of the discursive firmament as to be subliminal, not something one thinks of as missing or worth looking for. While that work-in-progress

idea proved true, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the construction of agency is at the core of establishing a globalism from below. That is significant after years of erosion of individual agency as the neoliberal umbrella cast its shadow on the globe (as Chapter 4 demonstrates). The rhetorical strategies underlying this work in progress involve: 1) the casuistic stretching of constructs from the democratic nation-state such as rights and individual sovereignty; and 2) the articulation of equipment for living in a globalized world – a strategy that directly exploits (whether consciously or unconsciously on the part of any individual rhetor) a weakness in globalism from above as demonstrated in Chapter 4. As Chapter 5 will show, these strategies can be found in numerous places around the world, from nongovernmental organizations, to movements to relatively mainstream farmer's market cooperatives and food blogs. While still a work in progress, there is now quite clearly more than one way to conceptualize a world of individuals beyond the nation-state system.

This dissertation proceeds through three essential stages. First, establishing the literature and methods that shape the project; then assessing the globalism from above to establish one side in the struggle over agency and finally assessing globalism from below and its effort to construct agency. By chapter, it proceeds as follows:

*Chapter 2: Literature review of globalization's current phase* – This chapter parses the literature and develops the parameters of this globalizing moment through neoliberalism and the infrastructure of the Internet as a means of assaying agency and the differences between globalism from above and below.

*Chapter 3: Methodology Chapter* – This chapter describes how to analyze texts in the context of globalization. It outlines the role of food in arraying the various aspects of globalization at this moment of history. It will also develop the use of Burkean tools in assessing the critical/cultural construct of agency.

*Chapter 4: Globalism from Above* – This chapter examines the rhetoric of neoliberal globalism from above with an eye toward drawing insights that can inform the understanding of globalism from below as a struggle. It analyzes texts from a wide range of institutions such as the United Nations and its bodies, the World Economic Forum, the International Monetary Fund, and multinational food corporations such as Monsanto and Cargill. I argue that individual agency is negated in this discourse, replaced with a form of *motion* as individuals simply move about the landmarks of free markets – producing, selling, and consuming – without initiating action from their own capacities. The equipment for living proffered in this discourse is simply to follow that motion. Deviations from that script – efforts to grow native foods versus global commodities, say – are constructed as backwards and harmful. Agency is reserved for global institutions.

*Chapter 5: Globalism from Below* – This chapter details the basis for the project's claims. I examine a far-ranging swath of texts from movements such as the World Social Forum, the Food Sovereignty Movement, the Slow Food Movement, groups espousing eat-local movements, a motley crew of writers from around the world commenting on a World Bank website, food bloggers and their commentators and others. I argue that voices from below do not reject globalization as a process so much as the

neoliberal discourse that shadows all considerations of this moment of globalization. Rhetors work to recover agency as a means of arguing for a globalization that stands neoliberalism on its head, placing local people in charge of a world of resources of capital, technology and expertise. While still emerging on several fronts that place it squarely behind globalism from above in its progress, globalism from below is wielding an act-based grammar to articulate equipment for living that is broader and more specific than globalism from above.

*Chapter 6: Conclusion* – The final chapter will articulate a framework for considering agency as a component of this moment and perhaps the next moment in the progress of globalization. This chapter theorizes my findings and proposes that a rhetoric of global personal sovereignty may be in the early stages of emerging as a form of grassroots globalism that might contend with neoliberal globalism from above. I also consider what Burke's discursive theory of history and the findings might suggest for neoliberalism's reign as the organizing discourse of a globalized world and suggest further areas of research.

My first advisor in graduate school told me that a scholar is not someone who knows lots of things. Rather, a scholar is someone who is truly bothered by things he or she does not understand. This dissertation project has been an education for me about the time in which I live. I can reasonably claim to know some things about it now that I did not know at the outset. That said, this knowledge is at best a framework for understanding – directional and informative, yet many things could develop in ways that I

cannot yet see or that are less than predictable. In short, there is still much about which to be bothered.

## Chapter 2: *Globalization or Globalism: Neoliberalism in the late 20th & Early 21st Century*

In Chapter One, I argued that globalization is a condition of the world, a force that has been present in one way or another for thousands of years. At certain moments, perhaps driven by the beginning or end of a large-scale conflict or the effects of new technology, globalization accelerates. This acceleration so disrupts the social order that the very language we use to talk about the world becomes less useful for positioning ourselves in the world and describing our capacities to affect it. As we pass through such a period once again, the discourse of citizenship we have relied on to construct our own sense of agency in the world no longer seems so effective.

Constructs and the words that apply to them are important and in this chapter I hope to work with two concepts that are often conflated and that conflation has material impacts on people's lives. In this chapter, I want to assay some of the scholarly explorations of the post Cold War world to further pull apart the condition of globalization from globalism as a discourse. *Globalization* is a fraught word that encompasses many technologies, social trends, cultural movements and exchanges and a host of other phenomena that are aspects of the world as a complex system. *Globalism* describes the discursive and power dynamics of shaping the social order on top of globalizing conditions. It is a way of thinking and talking about the world. Conflating *globalization* and *globalism* can be a natural confusion during times of change as people try to make sense of the shifting landscape. That conflation can also be an ideological

strategy to impose a new social order and/or a desperate effort to find a language to describe the changing world.

This chapter focuses on a discourse of globalism – neoliberalism – that has dominated the globe and made great headway in reshaping the social order in its image. Neoliberalism has shaped elite discourse in the post-Cold War period to the point that it appears to no longer be an ideology but a simple description of the world as a political and economic ecosystem. In part, my intention is to demonstrate that neoliberalism has established what this dissertation calls an *umbrella* discourse. *Umbrella* is obviously a metaphor, however this chapter will argue that it is an apt description of a discourse that claims to be the only refuge from the elements of modern life and casts a long shadow. Once it is raised, an umbrella also has the practical effect of creating a space that is *below* it.

Neoliberalism is presented as a discursive organization of the world that shapes the world and even adjacent theories of globalization. To understand the rhetorical process that enables that kind of hegemony, the chapter proposes that Burke's discursive theory of history can be applied to explain the current historical moment and provide a springboard for further study. A sharper focus on globalism versus structural factors of globalization, I contend, creates an entry point for rhetoricians to bring our toolkit to bear and contribute to the understanding of changes in the world at this historical juncture, and for my purposes to explore the impact on agency.

**How Did We Get Here, TINA?**

In 2013, former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher died. Among the many eulogies and retrospectives, there was talk of what might have been another person somehow involved in Thatcher's life: TINA. For instance, *The Nation* ran a headline that read: "At Thatcher's Funeral, Bury TINA, Too" (Flanders 2013). Who was TINA?

For good or ill, TINA was not a person but a rhetorical marker of neoliberalism. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Thatcher presided over what is considered by many to be a brutal economic liberalization in the UK, clamping down on labor unions and championing a free market philosophy of no holds-barred competition among nations. Standing tall in the shadow of the Soviet Union's collapse, Thatcher declared at every opportunity: "There is no alternative." That pronouncement's acronym *TINA* was born. One might ask: No alternative to *what*, exactly?

Events proceeded so quickly – in the UK and elsewhere – that TINA became a reality, driving out discussion of other alternatives to a world organized around free markets. To achieve that organization required numerous policy imperatives that could not be challenged without sounding like someone disconnected from reality. Harvey (2005) listed many of these Thatcher policies: a radical opening of the economy and labor markets to foreign competition, crushing labor union strength (even if it negatively impacted industries with strong unions), removing government from any direct involvement in the economy (in the European case that meant privatizing assets at fire sale prices), a financialization of the economy so that capital and credit could flow easily within and across borders, and the dismantling of the welfare state along with anything

that supported social safety nets such as education and other services, all of which was coupled with the promotion of an ethic of individual responsibility for one's own success and position in the social order (Harvey 2005 pp. 59-63). Despite this last point, TINA had a large impact on agency.

The line between Thatcherism and neoliberalism is hard to find. Thatcherism was neoliberalism in practice. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and other global institutions increasingly enforced these policy choices on the emerging economies in the world as their only available path to development. Harvey (2005) defined neoliberalism as:

> ...in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for instance, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence [sic], police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets...But beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit (Harvey 2005 p. 2).

As Harvey pointed out, just as the Westphalian consensus created the nation-state as the way to organize human beings into a global society, neoliberalism places free markets into that organizing role – and thus undercuts rhetorical tools for constructing

agency based on the nation-state discourse of citizenship. Neoliberalism goes further than simply substituting markets for nation-states in this reading. Neoliberalism holds that the state is to be distrusted. The state's job is to create the framework for markets to organize humans and economic activity on a global basis and then refrain from acting in those markets or otherwise attempting to shape the forces at work within markets.

Brown (2000) agreed on this central premise of neoliberalism even while striking a somewhat more sympathetic position. "The first premise of neo-liberalism [sic] is that there is no substitute for the market economy" (Brown 2000 p. 571). Brown went on to observe that liberals had always believed that point about markets to one degree or another. Yet, that fundamental premise grew in magnitude and theoretical power after the collapse of the Soviet Union's command economy. It also informed neoliberalism's claim that extending markets around the globe was a moral imperative for the West. "The second assumption of neo-liberal [sic] thought, and liberalism in general, is that free trade will benefit the poor...The debate over the value to the poor of an open economy is closely related to the third basic assumption of current neo-liberalism [sic], which is that the basic problem of the less-developed countries is a lack of development capital and that such capital can only flow to these countries in sufficient quantities via private capital markets" (Brown 2000 p. 571-572). Neoliberalism, as Brown pointed out, defines freedom first and foremost in economic terms. These last two imperatives then drove the need to re-engineer emerging economies quickly and brutally in what might be considered a *tough love* scenario from the comfort of New York, Washington DC or the City of London. This chapter will address the brutality, short-sightedness and many

contradictions of neoliberalism momentarily. Here, I want to underscore the rhetorical power of this view of the world in the waning days of the 20th century. Thatcher's TINA thesis and its parallels in the US and many circles imposed a rhetoric akin to the science of biological ecosystems or religious doctrine on a historical moment of globalization. Neoliberalism simply *became* the discourse of understanding the world in the same way that children are taught in science class that humans cannot breathe water or that there is only one God in Christian Sunday school.

Thatcher's statement, in hindsight, was clearly an ideological statement. Yet, in a time when the post-Cold War world was changing and the way we had described a globe divided by an ideological struggle no longer fit conditions, TINA looked like an accurate observation of the situation to many. US president Bill Clinton, certainly no political partner of Thatcher's, could not escape the apparent logic of the claim. Consider this excerpt from Clinton's speech at the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993:

> Make no mistake, the global economy with all of its promise and perils is now the central fact of life for hard-working Americans. It has enriched the lives of millions of Americans. But for too many those same winds of change have worn away at [the] basis of their security. For two decades, most people have worked harder for less. Seemingly secure jobs have been lost. And while America once again is the most productive nation on Earth, this productivity itself holds the seeds of further insecurity. After all, productivity means the same people can produce more or, very often, that fewer people can produce more. This is the world we face.
>
> We cannot stop global change. We cannot repeal the international economic competition that is everywhere. We can only harness the energy to our benefit. Now we must recognize that the only way for a wealthy nation to grow richer is to export, to simply find new

> customers for the products and services it makes. That, my fellow Americans, is the decision the Congress made when they voted to ratify NAFTA (Clinton 1993).

Unlike Thatcher's legacy of full-throated embrace, Clinton's words are hardly a ringing endorsement of bare-fisted economic competition on a global basis. Yet, TINA haunted these words. Clinton presented a social order with winners and losers and high stakes for all not as a choice, but simply the condition of the world to which all must adapt.

Even Clinton, arguably the most powerful person in the world, spoke as if he were powerless to protect his citizens from this natural law of freedom as defined by market competition. If the leader of the free world had no agency in the face of TINA, what capacity to affect the world did an average individual possess? Neoliberalism seemed in such pronouncements to be a natural law of globalization. It was not to be challenged even if its downsides could be listed in detail by the president of the United States. "Given this considerable hold on elite circles, neoliberalism has generally ranked as policy orthodoxy in respect of contemporary globalization. Indeed, neoliberalist ideas have held widespread unquestioned acceptance as 'commonsense'" (Scholte 2000 p. 39). As Scholte suggested, somehow neoliberalism passed from an intellectual idea to a set of policy considerations to the very definition of the world that only a fool would contest.

Yet, despite the connotations of the *neo-* prefix, neoliberalism was not a new idea hatched in the shadow of late 20th century world events. It was one idea of political economy among many that grew in the early 20th century amid the Soviet revolution, the

rise of fascism and the Great Depression's policies of government intervention in the West and the writings of John Maynard Keynes that advocated government's guiding hand in the economy when necessary. Neoliberalism was closely associated with the University of Chicago, Friederich Hayek and later his student Milton Friedman. During this tumultuous era it was viewed that classical liberalism (or at least a laissez faire version of it) was under assault by a variety of ideologies, exigencies and historical forces. Hayek called for a *new* liberalism that could do battle on these many fronts and quite specifically do so on a global basis. Hayek received some notoriety in London during the 1930s by criticizing social programs (where Margaret Thatcher would have been exposed to his ideas). Because the *Reader's Digest* excerpted his work, he also received a surprising amount of short-term fame when he came to the US for a series of lectures toward the end of World War II (when Ronald Reagan was making propaganda films for the Army). A Kansas City business person offered to fund a project whereby Hayek would develop a new global competitiveness regime for the US economy and Hayek built his team at the University of Chicago (Caldwell 2007 p. 17-20).

While Hayek's ideas are fundamental to contemporary neoliberalism, I do not intend to dwell on Hayek. Not only did Hayek write several books about his ideas, but other books have been written about them as well. I am, however, interested in how the sweep of his ideas came to define how many people think of a social order on a global scale. Several of Hayek's foundational precepts can be seen above in Harvey's definitions of contemporary neoliberalism and the Thatcherite economic program. Hayek focused on the individual as the building block of a complex society (Hayek 2009 pp. 10-

16). Government could not possibly comprehend all the complexity of the world, Hayek believed. Complexity was the product of millions and billions of individuals going about their daily lives and interacting with one another in countless ways. Markets, according to Hayek, are the necessary structure that enables freedom and *fairness* – by his definition of the term – measured by the effort one puts out and the relative value created for others (Hayek 2009 p. 21) as correlated through the pricing mechanism and not by any sense of justice or government redistribution. Prices were a prime mechanism by which markets worked, free of coercion in Hayek's view, to set value and send signals to market participants for action. Government should ensure the legal frameworks for functioning markets, but do no more. Hayek feared government intervention because government had coercive powers and could alter behaviors in the marketplace, throwing markets and pricing mechanisms out of kilter with potentially disastrous consequences (Hayek 2009 pp. 19-20). Free trade was an absolute necessity, then, since tariffs and other mechanisms were a prime way that governments could hinder market forces (Caldwell 2007 pp. 1-20).

While these ideas can be found all around us today, they were largely confined to the University of Chicago and certain academic and industrial circles for many years. "Yet this movement remained on the margins of both policy and academic influence until the troubled years of the 1970s. At that point, it began to move center stage..."(Harvey 2005 p. 22). Stagflation in the 1970s, economic restlessness among elites in general and a conservative political movement with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher as its

standard bearers discovered a rhetorical tool when Hayek was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1974 followed closely by his student Friedman in 1976.

Neoliberalism evolved during the 1980s as financiers became more involved and the teetering of the Soviet Union raised the possibility of new playing fields for global capital. The West "stumbled toward neoliberalization as the answer through a series of gyrations and chaotic experiments" in Latin America and other developing economies that could not resist those offering capital even on onerous conditions (Harvey 2005 p. 13). These were hardly win-win situations but enough capital changed hands that elites felt they had a winning formula. The Soviet Union's collapse and its ripple effects not only changed global politics; it released a discourse of social order that had already been gathering power. Indeed, there did not seem to be an alternative – at least not that anyone spoke of.

The late 1980s and 1990s were the heyday of a literature that celebrated neoliberalism as a positive and inevitable force in human social evolution (Fukuyama 1992, Ohmae 1990 as examples). These works followed what might be called the *affluence thesis*, a contention that neoliberal policies would lift those recently freed from totalitarianism and create a new equality within a free market system – with that utopian world system usually led by the US and often the result of inevitable currents in history. The battle over how to organize society was over, as Thatcher and many others proclaimed; while Bill Clinton, Tony Blair and others lamented that there was no alternative. Fukuyama famously declared that history was over, defining history as humanity's search for the right way to organize itself.

Theorizing this new global society became a popular undertaking in the academic community in the 1990s and beyond. Many different perspectives came forward; yet, neoliberalism and TINA can be found lurking in the shadows of even progressive-sounding ideas and agency struggled in TINA's shadow.

One approach to theorizing a global society involved the rapid, disorienting spread of a Western style modernity around the globe. Several different lines of thought can be found under this rubric, but Scholte (2005) summed up the point of departure for global modernity theory by describing a "dynamic whereby the social structures of modernity (capitalism, rationalism, industrialism, bureaucratism, individualism, and so on) are spread the world over, normally destroying pre-existent cultures and local self-determination in the process" (Scholte 2005 p. 16). Scholte's parenthetical contains specific references to concepts identifiable in neoliberalism all the way back to Hayek: capitalism, rationalism, industrialism and individualism. As more of the world is collected into this global modernity, according to this strain of thought, disruption is inevitable and that disruption is just as common to the West as elsewhere on the planet. The expansion of modernity exposes settled ideas of industrial society to be social constructions rather than natural laws.

This rapid expansion of modernity across the globe creates disjunctures felt in large and small ways by everyone. Giddens's (2003) "one world" thesis fits in this category – the notion that the walls of the bounded territories of nation-states had collapsed exposing everyone to the same world and common exigencies, unmediated by the boundaries of the nation-state. His Western perspective underscores how the nature

of a level playing field with developing nations disrupts life for Western individuals and national economies. Problems jump scale in a globalized modernity, according to Giddens, rendering the nation-state "not only too small to solve the big problems, but also too large to solve the small ones" (Giddens 2003 p. 13). Giddens argued that modernity is not just spreading from the West across the globe, but is becoming decentered, under no one's control and – several years before the 2008 global financial crisis – pointed to the growth of financial capitalism as a prime example of nation-states essentially losing sovereignty over markets, exactly as Hayek argued should happen (Giddens 2003 p. 16). Giddens's claim that we all had to get used to the idea that we live in one world rather than separate nation-states could be Hayek's claim to the primacy of markets with minor semantic changes.

Culture is often implicated by theorists of global modernity. Appadurai (1996) argued that a "disjuncture in societal relations" had occurred and that a significant part of that rupture has to do with neoliberal precepts and the commodification of things that were once arguably outside the economic realm. "The complexity of the current global economy has to do with certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics that we have only begun to theorize" (Appadurai 1996 p. 33). Appadurai proposed a new lexicon for understanding this new modernity: ethnoscapes (mobile people such as immigrants, business people, tourists that can affect relations among individuals and nations), mediascapes (the distribution of electronic resources of communication and the content flowing across them in various directions), technoscapes (the configuration and distribution of technologies and technical capabilities around the

globe), financescapes (the institutions of global capital and the patterns of capital flow), and ideoscapes (the interplay of political symbols and imagery flowing across the mediascape and the parties that put certain images and symbols into motion) (Appadurai 1996 pp. 33-36). Appadurai's language of "-scapes" is a useful tool for understanding the world, though for the purposes of this dissertation it is worth noting how even the language of analyzing the world is formed under the umbrella of neoliberal globalism. ""The suffix –*scape* allows us to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscapes, shapes that characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles" (Appadurai 1996 p. 33). Neoliberalism influences some of these individual scapes directly. According to Appadurai, immigrants move in part because of global labor markets and immigrants and natives alike need to take care not to get too comfortable in one locality in case capital needs them to move in its quest for productivity and profit (Appadurai 1996 p. 34). In addition to the obvious linkage between neoliberalism and financescapes, mediascapes and technoscapes cannot be separated from the global companies involved and the opening up of new markets for Western products.

Appadurai is not alone in attempting to understand what happens to culture under a neoliberal umbrella. Kraidy's (2005) critical transculturalism construct attempts to develop a way to appreciate the interplay of neoliberal power and culture. Global modernity enables a form of hybridization of culture and identity, Kraidy argued, through access to new tools – including Western culture through media exports – as well as linking localities through migration and global technology and transportation links.

Kraidy's impetus for developing his concepts was to attenuate a line of thought that saw a cultural neoliberalism taking hold, spreading Western culture as a form of neoliberal hegemony. He is joined by scholars from different perspectives. The concept of global modernity intersects theories of post-colonialism and the complexity of emerging out of the shadow of a colonial history into modernity. Indian scholars play a role (see Chatterjee 2004 and Gopinath 2005) with voices from Africa rising. For instance, Gopinath (2005) argued that the redistribution of modernity troubles past constructions of diaspora and homeland, flattening hierarchies and enabling the reassessment of the links among identity, place and culture – channeling Kraidy's transculturalism. Scholars such as Tomlinson (2002) confounds the Westernization thesis by arguing that globalized modernity simply opens up new modalities of identity that undermine a monolithic nation-state derived identity as the arbiter of a localized identity. "What is at stake…is a transformation in our routine pattern of cultural existence which brings globalized influences, forces, experiences and outlooks into the core of our locally situated lifeworld" (Tomlinson 2002 p. 273). While these lines of thought are valid and useful, for my purposes here they are reactions to neoliberalism both as a material fact in the world (e.g. Western cultural exports such as Hollywood blockbusters now circulate globally and dwarf local film industries) and its totalizing effect in the scholarship of understanding a world under a neoliberal umbrella.

Likewise, those studying global systems run directly into neoliberalism and their reactions vary from a critical engagement to a study of new social forms resulting from the infrastructure of global business and communication. Scholars such as Ritzer (2008)

and McChesney (2010) are well known for describing how neoliberal forces are imposing a system, supplanting other ways of organizing society. In that sense, they see neoliberal forces imposing a certain order. Others such as Rosenau (2002) view neoliberal forces as playing a role in disordering the world. "We live in a messy world" (Rosenau 2002 p. 223) Rosenau said pointedly. In Rosenau's view, global governance in a multi-polar world is, at best, a battle of multiple rule systems – no one of which can win out because of markets – that essentially constrain each other. Global systems study is about materiality and the ordering – or disordering – of the world in a way that is at least as tangible as it is conceptual. Ritzer (2008) traced supply chains and the construction of common consumer experiences around the world as a proliferating business model for multinational corporations. He argued that the goal of McDonaldization (or Starbuckification, or IKEAfication or insert another company that flattens an experience until a global business model can be wrapped around it) is to put local consumers around the world into a cage, albeit a pleasant one (Ritzer 2008 pp. 187-188).

In Chapter 1, I critiqued the literature of cosmopolitanism or global citizenship. Cosmopolitanism is often proffered as a new form of citizenship that extends beyond the nation-state (see Wendt 2004, Norris 2003 and Held 2004 for examples). Recall that my critique involved the lack of global structures designed to guarantee rights and capacities of agency in the same idealized (if imperfect) role as the nation-state; because of this lack, cosmopolitan citizenship is not a tangible force in the world. That is not to say that cosmopolitanism has no value as a concept to open up ways to think about a changing world. Neoliberalism, however, impinges on this concept precisely because

cosmopolitan citizenship is not a guaranteed status. It necessarily emphasizes an individualism and a person (businessperson or immigrant for instance) who is organized into the world by labor markets or a transnational territory in a global business rather than a nation-state collective.

Castell (2004) theorized a network society that in part raises the cosmopolitan idea above the level of individualism. Castell argued that networks rather than command and control systems have always been the favored construction of social relations; but as societies attained a certain scale the communication needs to maintain network relations were insufficient. Thus command and control systems took over and ordered society to their own convenience. Internet-driven communication through powerful devices reclaims the power to operate at global scales. "So, what is actually new, both technologically and socially, is a society built around microelectronics-based information technologies…It is on this basis that a new social structure is expanding as the foundation of our society: the network society" (Castells 2004 p. 7). In Castells's network society, individuals are nodes on a network that is constantly optimizing for efficiency, flexibility and scale (Castells 2004 p. 5). While the network society has tremendous merit in theorizing global civil society (see Young 2000, Matthews 2003, Kaldor 2003 for examples), a neoliberal ethic runs through it, emphasizing individualism and competition among individuals and networks. [8]

[8] I do not intend here to criticize the notion of Internet-mediated communication and the networks it creates as that is part of my argument in Chapter 5 for a recovery of agency. My point here is simply that neoliberalism influences the theory.

Neoliberalism's influence over various attempts to understand a world wrestling with an acceleration in globalization should not be surprising. One model for theorizing that influence comes from Harvey's (2011) view of seven spheres of capital activity[9] interacting. Certain spheres come to the fore for different people at different times in an attempt to reshape the relations among all the spheres of activity.

> No one of the spheres dominates even as none of them are independent of the others…Each sphere evolves on its own account but always in dynamic interaction with the others…The complex flows of influence that move between the spheres are perpetually reshaping all of them (Harvey 2011 p. 172).

Harvey's idea is that these various spheres of human activity – from the everyday to technology flows – are simultaneously distinct and interdependent, each evolving but influencing the development of the others in a complex interplay. Capital flows through all those spheres, so the intellectual effort to adjust ideas and theories about global social orders necessarily channel some line of logic from neoliberalism as a dominant discourse.

Some scholars have addressed neoliberalism directly from both theoretical perspectives and in studies of direct neoliberal experiments and programs. Marxist perspectives are popular with Harvey's work often cited. Some works focus on the World Bank or IMF to tell the story of neoliberalism (see Toussaint 2008 as an example). These works follow what might be called the *exploitation and inequality* thesis and use these Bretton Woods institutions as a combination of exemplars and symbols of the

[9] The seven spheres: technologies and organizational forms; social relations; institutional and administrative arrangements; production and labor processes; relations to nature; reproduction of daily life and the species; mental conceptions of the world.

hegemonic efforts of Western capitalism to both expand markets and reorganize the developing world into a workforce that serves capital. Stiglitz (2003, 2006) plays a pivotal role in shaping this wing of analysis, offering an insider's view of how the utopian new world order of the early 1990s went awry. Stiglitz is a former senior vice president of the World Bank who has written extensively with often blistering critiques, primarily of the IMF, while defending some conceptual underpinnings of the neoliberal project: "I believe that globalization – the removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national economies – can be a force for good and that it has the *potential* to enrich everyone in the world, particularly the poor" (Stiglitz 2003 p. *ix,* emphasis in original).

With words like those, Stiglitz seemingly offers something of a "nice idea, poorly executed" analysis of neoliberalism. However, the power of his critique is much more piercing. While authors such as Harvey begin by casting neoliberalism as an ideology and critique it as such, Stiglitz's insider view of the workings of institutions and policy setting demonstrate a reality-challenged religious belief system such as in this passage describing the IMF's interests in Latin America:

> But the IMF did not want to take on the mere role of an advisor, competing with others who might be offering their ideas. It wanted a more central role in shaping policy. And it could do this because its position was based on an ideology – market fundamentalism – that required little, if any, consideration of a country's particular circumstances and immediate problems. IMF economists could ignore the short-term effects their policies might have on the country, content in the belief that *in the long run* the country would be better off…Suffering and pain became part of the process of redemption, evidence that a country was on the right track (Stiglitz 2003 p. 36, emphasis in original).

While Stiglitz attributed this ideological view – evidence of failure rationalized as evidence of success – largely to the IMF, critics have expanded the critique to neoliberalism (what Stiglitz called "market fundamentalism") writ large. Neoliberalism has created a *winners and losers* model that upends social stability, health and environmental concerns in both the developed and developing worlds as labor is outsourced, wages are depressed and immigration becomes a spigot to turn on and off for the benefit of certain industries at certain times (Spector 2010). This scholarly critique bursts into the public consciousness from time to time through such activities as the Occupy Movement or Apple Inc.'s use of massive amounts of Chinese labor – and the apparent abuses that go with it – to provide iPhones and iPads to a class of global consumers.

Yet, because the ideology finds ways of ignoring or rationalizing contradictions, neoliberalism operates as a handy discourse to describe how the world works in the 21st century. Some writers assay how neoliberal discourse insinuates itself as a *new normal* of global organization, masking inequality and the erosion of democratic social relationships as the workings of some natural law. A growing wing of critical literature addresses the tensions, symbiosis and capitulations between the territorially-bounded state and a capitalism that is unbounded. For instance, Garrett (2000) argued that markets and nation-states could find some "peaceful coexistence" while acknowledging the tensions (Garrett 2000 p. 385). Scharpf (2000) raised a cautionary warning that states and markets are in a precarious "symbiosis" after states lost control of market boundaries

and now depend on economic performance for political viability (Scharpf 2000 pp. 370-371).

Harvey pushed this tension further, outlining the rise of the neoliberal state as a way to understand neoliberalism's rationalization of everything as the new normal. Under that paradigm, states exist to create a good business climate and create the resources for efficient production and consumption. However, neoliberals are quite suspicious of democracy and the state becomes a site for contradictions to play out that undermine democratic legitimacy, social cohesion and – at times – the smooth symbiosis that neoliberalism desires. "…[W]e can clearly see that neoliberalism does not make the state or particular institutions of the state (such as the courts and police functions) irrelevant, as some commentators on both the right and the left have argued. There has, however, been a radical reconfiguration of state institutions and practices…" (Harvey 2005 p. 78). Harvey pointed to numerous practices that can be seen every day such as lobbyists writing major legislation. The US Supreme Court decision in Citizens United discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation which sanctioned unlimited corporate money in elections is yet another example of how the state's powers are affected by neoliberalism. Increasingly, the state is embedded in markets, consistent with Hayek's view of minimal state intervention in the purity of markets.

As Chapter 1 argued, neoliberalism has become so pervasive that it is impacting the ability of individuals to exercise the agency built into the discourse of democratic citizenship. Neoliberalism has come to define the condition of a globalized world. Yet, it is not a set of scientific facts for how the world works as might be found in a biological

ecosystem. It is a discursively constructed and circulated template for organizing the social order that has achieved hegemonic impact and eroded the rhetorical resources for constructing agency.

**Can anything grow under an umbrella's shade?**

Could another form of globalism exist or evolve in its shadow, one that at least points the way toward a sense of agency comparable to the democratic nation-state's discourse of citizenship? This question first occurred to me while reading a pair of books contemplating the trajectory of a neoliberal world. Hardt & Negri (2000, 2004) engaged in a widely known study extending neoliberalism to some logical conclusions. I will briefly outline the arguments in both books and then position them as suggesting an entry point for a rhetorical analysis of globalism and the hunt for the construction of agency under the neoliberal umbrella. At the outset, it is important to state that what struck me about Hardt & Negri's two-part examination was the very notion that there *are* two parts worth understanding in examining the neoliberal world – the institutional and market forces unleashed (neoliberalism, or a globalism from above) and the struggle of individuals to act on the world once they come to grips with this flattening of the world (a struggle to develop what this dissertation calls globalism from below).

In *Empire*, Hardt & Negri (2000) argued that neoliberal forces are creating a new form of empire on the planet, an empire that Hayek might have been able to identify as his global free market. This new empire is distinguished from past imperial forms because it has no centralized authority that could be seen projecting its power from one territory to another the way that all lines of command in the British Empire led back to

London even if they began in Delhi. In making their case, the authors set aside the claim by some that neoliberalism emanated from the US, even if the US might have special status within the court of empire. Empire has no center, according to Hardt & Negri, and therefore comes from everywhere and nowhere at once.

> First and foremost, then, the concept of Empire [sic] posits a regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality...Second, the concept of Empire presents itself not as a historical regime originating in conquest, but rather as an order that effectively suspends history and thereby fixes the existing state of affairs for eternity. From the perspective of Empire, this is the way things will always be and the way they were always meant to be. In other words, Empire presents its rule not as a transitory moment in the movement of history, but as a regime with no temporal boundaries and in this sense outside of history or at the end of history. Third, the rule of Empire operates on all registers of the social order extending down to the depths of the social world. Empire not only manages a territory and a population but also creates the very world it inhabits (Hardt & Negri 2000 p. *xiv-xv*).

Shades of Fukuyama's claim to the end of history can be seen in this passage. This empire cannot be bounded, Hardt & Negri argue, therefore nation-states play a role but only a role that aligns with empire's goals in shaping the global order because the nation-state only exists within the empire. The empire is a web of globalized networks of production that rationalizes all power relations within itself (Hardt & Negri 2000 p. 20). Information technology is a powerful component of these networks, not only for capital mobility but for *knowledge* mobility, thus commoditizing knowledge and workers of all kinds, further freeing productivity from any constraints of territory (Hardt & Negri 2000 p. 296). Individuals are reduced to fungible components of *biopower*, inputs into the logical apparatus of the neoliberal empire. *Empire* (2000) paints a somewhat bleak

Orwellian picture. Atomized individuals are reduced to a status Hardt & Negri refer to as the *multitude*, a shifting mass of workers laboring in the productive networks of the empire (Hardt & Negri 2000 p. *xv*). However, Hardt & Negri propose that the shifting mass of the multitude and its inherent communicative activity in working the information networks of the empire lay the seeds for a new form of political subjectivity and they take up that proposition in the second book (Hardt & Negri 2000 pp. 410-411).

In *Multitude* (2004), Hardt & Negri attempt to theorize and operationalize their idea of this multitude of oppressed people under empire as a "social multiplicity" that manages to "communicate and act in common while remaining internally different" (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. *xiv*). Hardt & Negri position *multitude* as a mercurial construct that necessarily negotiates among atomized individuals, the construction of a new global class and a need to redefine the concept of *workers* to include highly educated knowledge workers (who produce "immaterial labor" toiling in knowledge work) who labor in the technology-driven production networks of empire – yet, multitude as a construct is not completely defined by any one of those facets of its contours. "The concept rests, in other words, on the claim that there is no political priority among the forms of labor: all forms of labor are today socially productive, they produce in common, and share too a common potential to resist the domination of capital. Think of it as the equal opportunity of resistance" (Hardt & Negri 2004 pp. 106-107).

The multitude is a necessary production of the empire to achieve its goals; however, the multitude's communicative nature makes it potentially subversive to empire. "This is indeed the key characteristic of immaterial labor: to produce

communication, social relations, and cooperation" (Hardt & Negri 2004 p 113). This ability – indeed a requirement – that a working class shares knowledge among its members and communicates via some of the same channels through which power flows (e.g. the Internet, intercontinental transportation networks) creates the potential for a consciousness creating commonality among the different types of labor. That consciousness could arise to challenge capital's network of power if a political project can awaken it.

> It is easy to see now why from the perspective of capital and the global power structure all these classes are so dangerous. If they were simply excluded from the circuits of global production, they would be no great threat. If they were merely passive victims of injustice, oppression, and exploitation, they would not be so dangerous. They are dangerous rather because not only the immaterial and the industrial workers but also the agricultural workers and even the poor and the migrant are included as active subjects of biopolitical production. Their mobility and their commonality is constantly a threat to destabilize the global hierarchies and divisions on which global capitalist power depends. They slide across the barriers and burrow connecting tunnels that undermine the walls (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 137).

The empire of capital actually needs these workers communicating with one another. That need becomes a vulnerability if the substance of their communication, symbol production and sharing starts forming a global social body. Capital will necessarily work to be the force organizing the multitude, yet the possibility exists that the multitude could become self-organizing (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 159). That self-organizing process could become the basis of global democracy (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 207).

Here, I want to step back to get some perspective on these two books. *Empire* (2000) is a reasonable view of a neoliberal world that draws on known facts and trends described above in this chapter. *Multitude* (2004) was less satisfying. Hardt & Negri are aware that they are attempting to describe an amorphous concept. The book's conceptual exploration also seems distracted by the Bush administration's war on terror as the authors attempt to pull aspects of the post-9/11 world into their concept (see section 3 *Democracy* for a lengthy example).

With that high-level critique stipulated, aspects of these bookends on a globalizing world suggest a framework for a rhetorical intervention. At first blush, the concept of *empire* seems definitive and totalitarian. Yet, as Hardt & Negri work toward their concept of the multitude, they open up the possibility that while neoliberalism might impose what this dissertation calls a globalism from above, the possibility exists that communication processes could recover a sense of agency at a grassroots level. If such a discourse were viable, the possibility arises that another form of globalism, one that is rooted in the local lived experience of individuals struggling under this umbrella discourse, could be identified.

To be clear, my goal in what follows is not to confirm or deny the existence of the multitude. Rather, I hope to bring rhetorical tools to explore what is happening on a global scale in the 21st century. What are the rhetorical underpinnings of neoliberalism? What, if any, response at the grassroots level is chartable?

**Globalism as an Attitude Toward History**

Whatever else neoliberalism may be, there is broad agreement that it is a discourse. Pierre Bourdieu called it a "strong discourse" picking up on a concept from Erving Goffman. "It is so strong and so hard to combat only because it has on its side all of the forces of a world of relations of forces, a world that it contributes to making what it is. It does this most notably by orienting the economic choices of those who dominate economic relationships. It thus adds its own symbolic force to these relations of forces" (Bourdieu 1998). Essentially, Bourdieu argued that neoliberalism allowed only one discourse to exist on its global terrain because it reoriented social relations, using the resulting social order to add to its symbolic weight. Harvey (2005) also noted the strategy to use "appeals to traditions and cultural values" to embed neoliberalism into the "common-sense" of daily life (Harvey 2005 pp. 40-41). Fairclough (2006) specifically looked at the broad discursive outlines of globalization and what he called a "globalist" perspective:

- Discourse can represent globalization, giving people information about it and contributing to their understanding of it.
- Discourse can misrepresent and mystify globalization, giving a confusing and misleading impression of it.
- Discourse can be used rhetorically to project a particular view of globalization which can justify or legitimize the action, policies or strategies of particular (usually powerful) social agencies and agents.
- Discourse can contribute to the constitution, dissemination and reproduction of ideologies, which can also be seen as forms of mystification, but have a crucial systemic function in sustaining a particular form of globalization san the (unequal and unjust) power relations which are built into it.
- Discourse can generate imaginary representations of how the world will be or should be within strategies for change which, if they achieve

> hegemony, can be operationalized to transform these imaginaries into realities (Fairclough 2006 p. 165).

Fairclough hints at something here that he does not develop. Much of his analysis of the globalist perspective is what this dissertation calls globalism from above and much of it is neoliberalism acting in its umbrella role. Yet, his last point hints that discourse can produce and spread another perspective. He ends his book on discourse and globalization pointing toward the production of a new version of globalism.

> The actual trajectory of globalization can be seen as shaped by a dialectic between two strategic forces, "globalization from above" and "globalization from below." Globalization from above is driven by the strategies of powerful agents and agencies...Globalization from below is driven by the strategies of individuals or groups in specific places to adapt to and gain from change, or defend themselves against it (Fairclough 2006 p. 171).

As much of this chapter has demonstrated, the first leg of the dialectic Fairclough described is much in evidence even if it has not been fully investigated as a discourse. What has been less studied is the rhetorical inner workings of the dialectic, complete with an excavation of globalism from below and the dialectical interactions.

My approach to globalization as a discourse extends from 20th century rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke's perspective on human communications as inextricably entwined with human motivation. Our *orientation to* and *use of* symbol systems is both product and producer of our orientation to the world and social relations.

> But, the question of motives brings us to the subject of communication, since motives are distinctly linguistic products. We discern situational patterns by means of the particular vocabulary of the cultural group into which we are born. Our minds, as linguistic products, are composed of concepts (verbally

> molded) which select certain relationships as meaningful (Burke 1935 p. 35).

The above passage is from *Permanence & Change*, the middle volume of a series of books Burke wrote during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In the above passage, Burke related a core piece of his view of Rhetoric as both a product of humans' symbol using faculty and the mechanism by which our minds are trained to adapt to the world as we find it. We are given words that describe the world and our motivations in that world. Burke's Depression Era writings are notable for his effort to appreciate what happens when this communicative milieu and the language it supplies falls out of sync with the material conditions and lived experiences of a population, "a time when there was a general feeling that our traditional ways were headed for a tremendous change, maybe even a permanent collapse. It is such a book [*Permanence & Change*] as authors in those days sometimes put together, to keep themselves from falling apart" (Burke 1935/1954 p. *xlvii*).

In *Attitudes Toward History* (1937), Burke took up the rhetorical processes by which people create and operationalize attitudes toward the conditions of the world, attitudes of "Yes, No, and the intermediate realm of Maybe. To consider, as succinctly as possible without loss of depth, the various typical ways in which these attitudes are both subtly and grandly symbolized..." (Burke 1937 p. *i*). Discourses develop as humans find themselves "confronting kinds of quandary that...recur under various historical conditions" and "the tenor of men's policies for confronting such manifold conditions has a *synthesizing* function" (Burke 1937 p. *iii*, emphasis in original).

The results of this synthesis are frames that orient people to the conditions of the era. Burke focused primarily in theorizing the frame of acceptance, an orienting discourse that incorporates people into a certain social order. That, then, provided the point of departure to describe a frame of rejection, essentially the mirror image of the acceptance frame, an emergent discourse that – as the name implied – rejects the acceptance frame. In what follows, I will describe the theoretical underpinnings of the acceptance and rejection frames. That will set context for a methodological perspective in the next chapter. At this juncture, it is important to note that this interplay of acceptance and rejection parallels the notion of globalism from above and below and opens up a way to examine their differences.

An acceptance frame is more than a single thesis statement. "By 'frames of acceptance' we mean the more or less organized system of meanings by which a thinking man gauges the historical situation and adopts a role within it" (Burke 1937 p. 5). This one sentence from Burke offers a wealth of clues for appreciating the nature and utility of acceptance frames and how a single frame transmits itself through everyday discourse.

According to Burke, rather than a single declarative statement, an acceptance frame is a *system of meanings*. I'll complicate the word *meanings* in a moment; however, suffice it to say here that the system at issue is one of thoughts and ideas that are organized. That implies a logic that provides connective tissue between ideas or discursive units that might be produced in varying situations. People need words to identify good things and bad things in their era. They need to know how to act and here Burke's idea of motivations helps to construct the logic that binds the frame together.

> "Action" by all means. But in a complex world, there are many kinds of action. Action requires programs – programs require vocabulary. To act wisely, in concert, we must use many words. If we use the wrong words, words that divide up the field inadequately, we obey false cues. We must name the friendly or unfriendly functions and relationships in such a way that we are able to do something about them (Burke 1937 p. 4).

In a given era, under given conditions, a great many things are possible, Burke noted. The individual needs a vocabulary that narrows that field so that the *right* things present themselves clearly. By the same logic, the individual needs to know what *not* to do and what to combat in the world. The frame provides that vocabulary and by circulating that discourse widely, the frame's logic – or *program* – becomes embedded in everyday life.

A given frame creates certain roles for a person and forecloses others. As Marx referenced in "On the Jewish Question," the narrative (acceptance frame) of the democratic nation-state created the role of citizen and thus called human beings into that role (Marx 1992 p. 220). Emerging from subjecthood, people needed to know how to act in a world where they theoretically were sovereigns of their own lives. Words such as "vote" were needed to establish agency in accordance with the logic of the democratic nation-state. At the same time, that frame created no role for certain people who did not fit the role of citizen which might include anarchists and others pressing issues with their states, but it also excluded aboriginals and stateless people such as the Roma of Europe. In the same way, the acceptance frame is simultaneously an enabler and a coercive force.

One can construct a role in the world, but only roles either presupposed in the frame or producible with the resources inherent in the frame.

To continue dissecting the above sentence, the frame provides a *gauge* to assess the world and the given situations one encounters. Elsewhere in the book, Burke wrote: "In the face of anguish, injustice, disease, and death one adopts policies. One constructs his notion of the universe or history, and shapes attitudes in keeping. Be he poet or scientist, one defines the 'human situation' as amply as his imagination permits; then, with this ample definition in mind, he singles out certain functions or relationships as either friendly or unfriendly" (Burke 1937 pp. 3-4). The world is a complex place full of the good, the bad and the ugly and the individual desires a template for parsing reality into those categories. The acceptance frame provides that template, enabling an individual to adopt a role in this complex world and act in accordance with that organized world, supporting those discriminations deemed friendly and resisting those deemed unfriendly by the yardstick provided by the acceptance frame.

The acceptance frame then exists for a period of time as it is useful. It is extended as conditions change through casuistry, a rhetorical stretching of the logic to incorporate new conditions (Burke 1937 p. 24). Its destiny, though, is to eventually break apart at the point it can no longer be extended rhetorically to match the conditions of the world. Acceptance frames can begin to take shape from "shards" of the previous era's frame as it broke apart. For instance, one might consider that economic liberalism was a shard extended into an acceptance frame when the Cold War frame broke apart with Hayek's neoliberal template already prepared to extend it.

It is worth distinguishing between Burke's construct of the acceptance frame and ideology. To torture an adage, they are apples and oranges though both are fruit. It is the difference between the physicist who has studied gravity for years and intimately understands the mathematical equations that define the relationships between mass and foot-pounds of force exerted versus the country bumpkin who simply knows not to jump off the roof. A frame might be thought of as an ideology that so thoroughly won a contest of beliefs that no one remembers the contest.

In the transition periods in Burke's discursive theory of history with which this project is concerned, many ideologies might vie for greater hegemony. An ideology passes into status as an acceptance frame when it so wins the contest that it corrals more than acolytes and true believers. People begin falling into line with the frame in what Burke described as a "bandwagon process" (Burke 1937 pp. 115-116) whereby the frame's strengths and momentum breed further strength and momentum. Those who would resist cannot recruit others to their view and to an increasingly large segment of the social world they seem to be questioning reality itself. A tipping point has been reached. An acceptance frame is so much a part of the everyday communicative environment that it is no longer identified as a perspective on shared conditions but a simple description of the conditions of the era.

Harvey (2005) illustrated this tipping point phenomenon in describing the difference between neoliberalism as ideology and its evolution into neoliberalism as the common sense view of the world. Contrast these two statements from Harvey's history of neoliberalism.

> Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade.
>
> Neoliberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse. It has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world (Harvey 2005 pp. 2-3).

In the first statement, Harvey described neoliberalism as an ideology. It can be held and spoken of vehemently by adherents and others can agree with that theory or disagree with it and perhaps shout back with their own view of how things ought to work. Note Harvey's signal that he is setting up a larger move in his argument when he wrote that he was speaking of neoliberalism "in the first instance."

The second statement puts neoliberalism on a broader and much deeper plane that is uniquely rhetorical. Here, neoliberalism "has become incorporated" into what passes in everyday living as common sense. It is expressed as a "mode of discourse" that is so prevalent and has so structured the social world that it no longer carries the trappings of ideology. In effect, disagreeing with it requires a step outside what *everybody knows* as common sense. Harvey is channeling Burke's construct of the acceptance frame in describing this shift from ideology to a mode of discourse. This shift from ideology to common sense turns the acceptance frame into a pragmatic accommodation by Burke's theoretical thinking person. It is no longer about what "I believe" about the world, but merely a matter of *being* in the world and living within its

conditions. "[M]aterial and moral resources" are organized around the frame to accommodate it to all sectors of life (Burke 1937 p. 27).

Here, it is worth returning to Burke's notion of a system of *meanings* to complicate what is meant by that final term in the above locution and shed light on Harvey's mode of discourse. Burke did not directly define *meanings,* an omission that lends the term a certain amorphous nature. However, he demonstrated the construct in action both in literature and in history, calling attention to certain terms and ideas and the connective tissue among them that provides guidance to appreciating his definition of *meanings* and the critical skill in identifying acceptance frames in practice, the subject of the next chapter.

My intention is to investigate neoliberal globalism from above as an acceptance frame to understand its rhetorical workings. Burke's discursive theory of history potentially makes room for globalism from below as a rejection frame. The rejection frame is both an attitude toward prevailing conditions and to the acceptance frame. "'Rejection is but a by-product of 'acceptance.' It involves primarily a matter of emphasis...It is the heretical aspect of an orthodoxy – and as a such, it has much in common with the 'frame of acceptance' that it rejects" (Burke 1937 p. 21). The rejection frame does not ignore the material reality of conditions. As Burke said, the rejection frame places different emphasis in explaining the conditions. The rejection frame also understands its place under an umbrella discourse not of its own making. The rejectionist understands that he or she is a heretic. Burke argued that Goethe knew that Faust troubled the capitalist frame by creating an ambiguous character that "would assert his

genius even at the risk of partnership with the devil" (Burke 1937 p. 29). Rejection chooses aspects of the acceptance frame and asserts a different perspective that undermines those aspects. So, to the degree this dissertation can identify the emergence of a rejection frame, it will be a frame that knowingly grows in the shade of a neoliberal umbrella.

## Chapter 3: *Methodological Considerations: Sampling & Framing the Globe*

This chapter develops a critical method for analyzing discourses of globalism from above and below as a battle of acceptance and rejection frames, discourses aimed at building a social order on current conditions. Burke used the past to illustrate his concept in *Attitudes Toward History* and it is always easier to understand the past than the age in which one lives. The past offers some distance from which to analyze patterns. Such distance is, at best, less available in the age in which one lives. The present is a fluid time and we are immersed in its daily battles, exigencies and cynicisms. Spotting discursive patterns in the well-worn ground of history is arguably easier than finding emergent patterns in the fluff, rough and tumble of what might seem normal background noise of one's daily existence.

The present chapter explains the process of turning Burke's theory of discursive history into a method for identifying acceptance and rejection frames in the present. So, this chapter mixes an unpacking of the framing concept with the critical tools to analyze global acceptance and rejection frames in the world around us. To identify these frames in action, the critic must pay attention to:

- The *equipment for living* in the current era that a frame constructs; that equipment could be a single imperative – e.g. submit to the edicts of the Church in Burke's historical view – or a more complex set of actions built around a core logic as Chapter 5 will demonstrate.

- A rhetoric of transcendence that essentially puts that equipment for living into an argument for compliance.

The frames of acceptance and rejection operate in different ways and have some important overlaps, as I will explain in what follows. The chapter starts with the acceptance frame to tease out the critical method. Acceptance frames present something of a path of least resistance to those muddling through daily life and understanding its contours gives context to the nature of rejection. The chapter then proceeds to applying those insights to the understanding and identification of the rejection frame. As the second part of the chapter will demonstrate, the rejection frame takes the acceptance frame as its point of departure. The chapter closes by explicating the reasons that texts involving food talk meet the needs of assaying discourse at a global level.

**Identifying Equipment for Living & Transcendence in the Acceptance Frame**

Recall that Chapter 1 described globalization as a "condition" of the world. The acceptance frame offers *equipment for living* in a specific set of conditions in an era (Burke 1937 p. 5). Any era contains contradictions, power structures, anxieties and other exigencies. Navigating that pattern of life requires certain tools – certain ways of being in the world – that Burke argued were produced and reinscribed through discourse. Those tools are delivered through discourse and constitute equipment for living in an age, essentially arguing either explicitly or symbolically that to live under certain conditions, one should take certain actions and avoid others. Brummett (1992) explained the construct in the context of media criticism:

> If one fears that he or she will lose a job, seeing a television show about unemployment better equips one to live through that experience. Running throughout Burke's writings is the theme that articulation of a situation in discourse "vicariously" helps the audience to understand and act through their own similar situations, and that such articulation suggests helpful motives for the audience to embrace in confronting their trials...By posing the problem of unemployment to the unemployed, for instance, discourse activates or addresses their "appetites" or concerns. When discourse satisfactorily shows a "solution" to unemployment...the formal completion of the discourse is satisfying to the audience and thus provides them with the motives, hope, and symbolic resources to face their real situation (Brummett 1992 p. 482, emphasis in original).

Brummett's description contains three key steps in understanding how discourse works to equip people for living in a certain era: problem, activation, solution. In Brummett's example, the problem is unemployment. The activation is a connection of the discourse's portrayal of the problem with the "appetite" or need of an audience member. The solution is whatever actions the discourse (in Brummett's case, a film's plot and resolution) suggests to the audience member. The critic's task is to link this complex to real world conditions (Brummett 1992 pp. 482-484). The starting place is to identify the relevant situation in the world that creates the shared problem.

In Brummett's original piece, the problem he identified in both 1950s and 1970s America was economic alienation driven by the combination of "vast technological changes," an assertion of conformity from an alliance of government and big business and fear of the other driven by escalations of the US-Soviet Cold War (Brummett 1992 pp. 484-485). He argued that activation of these fears occurred through the dramatic narrative form embedded in the cinematic genre. That form provided solutions that might

be interpreted as “stay awake” to the dehumanizing elements around you, call on help where possible as you see these forces arise and hang on to your humanity at all costs (Brummett 1992 p. 487).

The equipment for living produced in a specific discourse need not be so enlightened. Picking up on the Cold War theme, consider another example for illustration purposes. Nuclear annihilation was a problem much on the minds of Americans during the Cold War. In the event of a Soviet nuclear attack, generations of American school children were trained in such practices as crawling under their desks or squatting against walls in hallways with their heads between their knees (my own training during that era). These images and practices circulated widely and their echoes continue to circulate today to the degree that if there were some form of attack – e.g. a radioactive or *dirty* bomb or some such thing – many might default to hiding under a desk or squatting against a wall precisely because that equipment for living would be activated. That speaks to the power of this problem-activation-solution complex that Brummett identified – yet only at a certain level. To complete the analysis from a critical perspective requires a further step in linkage of conditions and authority symbol systems. This instructive discourse imparts much deeper equipment for living under a constant threat: do what authorities tell you to do. Therein lay the power of this discursive conditioning. It does not have to make empirical sense that covering your head or squatting against a wall has any real connection to surviving a nuclear bomb blast. You do it because a discursive environment gave you a solution to the problems of your day. This uncritical conformity underscores the *acceptance* part of the *acceptance* frame. You

are given a motive to take up this particular equipment rather than a rational explanation that can be critically challenged.

The acceptance frame operationalizes this equipment at such a scale that this system of *oughts* and *ought nots* passes into the realm of common sense. In his breakdown of discursive history, Burke described an example he termed a *medieval synthesis*, an acceptance frame that emerged out of the multi-generational European chaos in the centuries after the breakup of the Roman Empire. The breakup of the empire established new conditions that were significantly different from the old social order. No one was defined any longer as a Roman citizen or subject. The Mediterranean world, in Burke's view, suffered from alienation and disorder as people struggled to define themselves and their relations to others. This problem required new equipment for living.

The Medieval Synthesis frame operationalized "an organic theory of society" (Burke 1937 p. 128) in which the social world embraced unity in the face of differences. "...it was not asked that people be all alike, as in the later Protestant communities; there were those who fought, those who worked, and those who prayed, each kind of effort contributing its part to the general welfare" (Burke 1937 p. 128). As Burke described it, despite differences of class, social role and nationality people of all walks were unified by their "common citizenship in heaven" (Burke 1937 p. 128).[10] The Church worked out an elaborate set of compromises with new spiritual or social interpretations that became new monastic "orders" within the Church synthesis.

[10] This is also a transcendent rhetoric and I will come back to it in a moment.

In the above example from Burke, the problem was the chaos of post-Rome Europe and the Mediterranean Basin. The Church's descriptions of that chaos from the pulpit and from the Vatican were ones that average persons could relate to because they experienced dislocation and estrangement from people who now could more freely move about than they could in the old Roman order. The solution was to re-unify as Catholic Christians and the action to be taken was to submit to papal authority.

Putting this acceptance frame into everyday discourse, Burke found a grammar that extended familial relationships into a metaphor for the larger society – brother, sister, father, mother – that not only synthesized relationships across the large swath of European society but also embedded centralized authority into the circulating system of meanings. "From this metaphor there flowed the need of obedience to authority, as embodied in custom. In families, one does not 'vote.' Authority does not arise by deputation, as in parliamentary procedure – it just is where it is, being grounded in the magic of custom" (Burke 1937 p. 129). Said differently, you obey your father not because you rationally determine he is logically correct, but because he is your father. This system of meanings circulated the equipment for living in a world where the feudal king had ultimate coercive power and the Church superintended justice, knowledge and the hope for harmony in a Mediterranean-centric world with a violent, fractious history (and future as it turned out).

So, in the case of equipment for living in a globalizing world, the critic must identify a problem-activation-solution complex that works as well in Africa as it does in North America. For neoliberalism to apply as an acceptance frame, it must suggest a

problem or fear that could be shared across continents despite a wide variation in living standards. For instance, being poor in New Orleans might mean living in the lower Ninth Ward that is still being rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina and living on the federal SNAP or food stamp program and welfare. Being poor in Nigeria might mean digging through a massive garbage pile outside of cities to scavenge anything that could be reused or sold and sleeping in a hut in a shantytown at night. The lower Ninth Ward might look like a significant step up by contrast. A middle class income in Africa might be well below the poverty line in the US. For a global acceptance frame to work, the problem must be applicable across these material situations, somehow representing the lived experience of many different people who still share certain conditions. The fears and problems can be represented literally or symbolically as in Brummett's example of media criticism.

The critic must also identify the problem's resolution embedded in the discourse, the actual equipment for living or the action to be taken in the conditions of the world and establish the linkage between problem and solution embedded in the texts. It is some prescription for how to fit into the society, as Brummett alludes to: "The critic treats discourse as symbolic medicine, and the essay should assay that discourse to discover how an audience might use that discourse" (Brummett 1992 P. 247). To *use* the discourse, the solution imparts an action – perhaps *action* loosely defined – to be taken. In my earlier Cold War example, there is a physical action involved – squatting in the hallway. Yet, the symbolic solution is to trust in authority in times of existential crisis.

Accepting the equipment for living does not require conversion to a particular doctrine and regular attendance of meetings where that doctrine is proclaimed. The

frame need only direct action in a way that satisfies norms of the period – norms that are co-produced by the circulating frame and the normative behavior that puts the frame into action and into the social firmament as common sense. The term *equipment for living* implies that the frame is not only pragmatic but easily accessible through the circulating system of meanings. One need not think about it or consider alternatives because the acceptance frame and social conditions become integrated.

In the case of global discourse, the solution or the equipment for living must be applicable across the many physical and material gulfs mentioned above. Activation could bridge these gaps across material situations, essentially providing ways for the audience to link problems with their own situations. Rising above poverty, for instance, would be a common motivation even if poverty looks different in different places (e.g. poverty in America still feels like poverty to those trapped in it, but poor people in Africa might view such living standards as a step up from their own definition of poverty).

**Rhetoric of Transcendence**

The acceptance frame requires a discursive means of circulating and threading through the language of the day, establishing a pattern of authority symbols and insinuating itself into what passes for common sense in an era. That means of circulation is a rhetoric of transcendence that the critic must identify in the discourse and social ecosystem of the moment.

Transcendence was a key construct for Burke and it inhabits several of his works. This section offers a brief overview of the construct as Burke described it and then discusses its identification in texts.

Transcendence is a move to bridge disparities. "We mean by 'transcendence' the adoption of another point of view from which [differing concepts] cease to be opposites" (Burke 1937 p. 336). As Burke indicated, rhetorics of transcendence are attempts to reconcile opposing things. Transcendence usually involves a hierarchy and refers to a movement of ideas, constructs and social values from one plane to another of that hierarchy. With that basic thumbnail in place, a rhetoric of transcendence generally falls into three categories:

- Transcendence upward: an idea moves from a lower plane of the hierarchy to a higher one. It is an ennobling movement, imbuing an idea with a higher purpose. For instance, Brummett argued that Ronald Reagan used transcendence against Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential campaign by transforming the "sin" of voracious consumption into an act of patriotism that embodied American values (Brummett 1981 p. 259).
- Transcendence downward: Two forces are shown to be in opposition. However, transcendence downward can show that they rest on the same common foundation. Here, one might think of the contemporary Left/Right political schism that demands orthodoxy. While the two positions are in vehement conflict on one plane, on another plane they are part of the same discourse claiming that only two ways exist to organize political thinking. Policing orthodoxy and eschewing a

"middle ground" reinforces that larger discourse. Another version of transcendence downward is debunking an idea in which one debases it. Something that might look altruistic is shown to be simply acting in one's own interest (Burke 1937 p. 338).

- Adopting a third position: This is a modified version of transcendence downward, one that is more situational than hierarchical. Again, two opposites are sketched out. At that point, a new position is constructed that is mutually beneficial to both opposing sides. The opposition is not alleviated, but this third position allows the two positions to sublimate the difference even if it is not fully resolved. Here, one might think of pro and anti abortion foes working together to reduce unwanted pregnancies (Cisneros 2009). They have not resolved fundamental differences but have taken up a position that allows them to sublimate those differences.

Transcendence upward and transcendence downward described ideas moving through levels of a hierarchy (Burke 1937 p. 337). Acts carried out for the greater glory of God were offered as a simple view of transcendence upward, and debunking or debasing an idea to refute it as that of transcendence downward. By moving ideas up and down a hierarchy of planes of existence they take on different characters, transforming through traversing the hierarchy through debasement or exaltation and arriving at their destination plane in a hierarchy.

To spot a rhetoric of transcendence, the critic must look for a pattern of: Division-appeal-resolution. The ideas or forces in opposition must be identified. An appeal to transcend that division must be constructed. The end state must be described.

The paradox of transcendence is that it first requires division. The critic must first find the creation of division. Nuance is the first casualty in that move. The positions or concepts under examination cannot have significant overlap or there is nothing to transcend. The points to consider must be rendered in some intractable fashion for a rhetoric of transcendence to come into play in a text. For instance, Burke noted the problem of a poet attempting to be forgiving to all in discussing good and bad people.

> ...the writer finds that there is good and bad in everybody, but for hortatory purposes he divides people into *classes* – and by treating them *as members of these classes*, he tries to coach his 'human' attitude in accordance with this philosophy of classes, thereby schematically dividing the good from the bad, the vital from the decadent, the rising from the dying, etc. He thereby tends to 'transcend' his earlier position, to 'reconcile opposites' by a concept of a 'higher synthesis' (Burke 1937 p. 80, emphasis in original).

Burke's poet finds that trying to be reasonable and allow that good and bad can exist in the same person actually undermines the point he is attempting to make. So, for the purposes of making the point, any subtlety must be banished as in this exaggerated example: Here are the good people over in this corner by the television; over there behind the sofa are the bad people. No one inhabits the center of the room because good and bad are opposing sides in this argument. Without this stark, uncompromising division, there is nothing to transcend.

As Burke noted, the critic must first find people dividing things into parts or classes for the purposes of then making an argument about that division and a potential reconciliation. As a first step, the rhetor creates a division that he or she can then transcend. In Burke's example, a rhetor noting the existence of good and bad (the abstractions that can stand in for negative motivations or impulses) in all people has no place to go with that observation if the goal is to argue for change of some sort. The rhetorical move toward transcendence begins with creating the division that must be transcended. In Burke's example, the rhetor creates *good people* and *bad people*. His use of the term "schematically" has methodological undertones indicating that this division is to be done in detailed terms the way that a schematic diagram is a detailed look at a specific electrical circuit such that any electrician could construct it. The division must be unmistakable to serve the rhetor's ultimate goals, so nuance is not useful. In Burke's example, the rhetor would banish the notion of finding any good in the bad people or bad in the good people in order to create two classes of people.

This division is then reconstructed as a hierarchy, somehow connected to the social order. "Hierarchies do not eliminate mystery; rather, they provide an order for controlling it...Hierarchies may be constructed around principles as explicit as the laws and rules governing the twelfth precinct, or values as moral, social, and ineffable as a southern community's commitment to racial harmony" (Brummett 1981 p. 255). Said differently, hierarchies are rhetorical devices for controlling the world, not necessarily explaining it. The critic must be open-minded to find hierarchies created out of structural

facts – e.g. laws in Brummett's example – or concepts, values or symbols that might represent more ephemeral constructs.

In the current project, globalisms from above (i.e. neoliberalism) and below (i.e. from the grassroots) together imply a hierarchy. That provides a point of departure for analysis, but the critic must do something with any obvious hierarchy rather than take it at face value. For instance, Huglen & Brock (2003) critiqued a speech by Hillary Clinton using a similarly simplistic global/local hierarchy.[11] They used the speech to morph a hierarchy of *global* and *local* economic categories into global capitalism and local communitarianism, a more symbolic values-oriented hierarchy following Brummett's template for the ways hierarchies can be constructed. They then analyzed Clinton calling for a governmental level to be inserted into the simple hierarchy that would mediate between the two and ensure certain values are preserved on a global playing field. Huglen & Brock (2003) demonstrated that the implied structural hierarchy of above/below must be complicated with values or opposing forces to be useful in understanding the rhetoric of globalism.

As the next chapter will demonstrate, globalism from above constructs the global market as a site of salvation and bliss while local environments are constructed in terms of abject poverty populated with pathetic people. Likewise, the stirrings of globalism from below in Chapter 5 construct global institutions as oppressors and local environments as places of rich cultural history struggling for dignity against forces from

[11] In full disclosure, Huglen and Brock use different Burkean tools for their critique. I use this example because it starts with the same above/below starting point and then complicates the simple hierarchy with other constructs that create the rhetorical analysis. Transcendence would have worked just as well for Huglen and Brock.

above. In essence, the first casualty of a transcendent rhetoric is nuance in laying out the forces in opposition. Stark divisions are necessary to create the logic of transcending a current state to a new one, of crossing the divide or of finding either the universal state or the foundational element that joins the opposing forces. Hierarchy is a necessary element of creating transcendence so that there can be a movement. The above and below dichotomy of globalism is a natural hierarchy of which rhetors can make use as long as that dichotomy is rendered in a way that some construct or value in isolation can move among layers in the hierarchy. That sets the landscape for an appeal.

The appeal is an argumentative strategy to invite transcendent action or a corrective of that condition of division. To do so, the rhetor isolates some construct as a thing unto itself so that it can move within the hierarchy and thus transcend the opposing forces (Parson 1993). Jackson (2010) analyzed a form of upward transcendence in which two opposing forces in American politics – liberal and conservative – are reconciled by calling for a moralizing religious fervor that would transcend both. In Brummett's (1981) work on the 1980 presidential election, he analyzed Jimmy Carter's description of consumption as a "sin" and contrasted Ronald Reagan's argument of transcendence. "Finally, one may avoid guilt by engaging in transcendence. This avoidance of guilt puts the sin into a perspective which redefines it as 'not-a-sin,' as a virtue or as the requirement of some higher and nobler hierarchy" (Brummett 1982 p. 256). Brummett argued that while Carter attempted to isolate consumption and debase it in a hierarchy of virtues as a sin, Reagan ennobled consumption as an act of patriotism. He exhorted

voters to feel good about the abundance sloshing through the US economy and take action by consuming – as well as voting Republican in the election.

The critic's job after parsing the division and hierarchy steps, then, is to discover the transcendent construct at the heart of an appeal for action. To foreshadow the next chapters, we will see that agency is a transcendent construct in the battle of globalisms. To complete the analysis, the transcendent rhetoric must resolve the tensions in a description of what a resolution of the opposing forces looks like.

The resolution is the denouement of the argument constructed in the appeal. The rhetor paints a rhetorical picture of division giving way to consubstantiality. In the acceptance frame, the resolution is inherently casuistic, resolving any division into the prevailing order. In Burke's example of Medieval Synthesis, the heterogeneity of European cultures is resolved through the Church and its rituals such as communion that ennoble all souls through consubstantiality in heaven and the body of Jesus Christ (Burke 1937 p. 337). For neoliberalism – again foreshadowing the next chapter – the resolution for those seeking to lift themselves out of poverty is to join globalized markets to transcend their limited poverty-stricken scraps of earth and enjoy all the fruits of free trade across the planet.

In the context of global food systems, transcendence in the acceptance frame is a way to neuter the notion that people are in control of what they should plant and how they should feed themselves. It becomes the basis then of organizing them into the global market system of neoliberalism. Moving values and motivations up and down a hierarchy from individual acts to collective beliefs and social organization are a necessary

part of transcendence in the life of an acceptance frame. That movement from individual to collective is a necessary part of the transformation of what might otherwise be an ideology to an acceptance frame. It satisfies a basic comfort humans naturally seek in the social order.

> Linked with this is the need to feel the 'reasonableness' of one's society, the reasonableness of its aims and methods. This reasonableness comes to a focus in symbols of authority…In this sense, even the serf 'owned' the insignia of the nobles, to the extent he could believe in their conduct, with its corresponding ethical and esthetic norms, as the 'logical culmination' of feudal ways (Burke 1937 p. 342, emphasis in original).

By circulating a system of meanings, the acceptance frame ultimately is coproduced and reinforced by the individual. The serf might not have liked everything about being a serf, but that was the way the world worked as any common-sense serf knew. Therefore, there was some pride to be taken in being part of a world that could also produce nobles and their pageantry on the commons.

Identifying this three-step move – division, appeal, resolution – is key to identify the transcendent rhetoric that operationalizes the acceptance frame. The rejection frame uses these same devices. It is not sufficient to think of it as simply the mirror image of the acceptance frame.

**The Rejection Frame: Transcending the Prevailing Order**

Burke theorized rejection as an attitude toward the historical moment and its dominant mode of discourse (Burke 1037 p. 21). Yet, it is not a denial of the conditions underlying the era or blind to the prevailing order. It also requires more than stamping

one's feet and withdrawing from the world. Rejection is a discourse that proposes a shift in the social order. To assay discourse for a competing globalism to a prevailing neoliberal order requires unpacking how rejection frames are similar to and different from acceptance frames. The critic must identify:

- An organized discourse that takes the acceptance frame as a point of departure rather than a gospel.
- The negation of one or more symbols of authority in the acceptance frame.
- Equipment for living under the prevailing order that takes action toward a new future.
- A rhetoric of transcendence that ennobles some value or construct that is debased in the current order into an end state or new social order.

"'Rejection' is but a by-product of 'acceptance'…" Burke wrote (Burke 1937 p. 21). "It is the heretical aspect of an orthodoxy – and as such, it has much in common with the 'frame of acceptance' that it rejects." Said differently, rejection can only become an attitude once orthodoxy exists. Until the orthodoxy – the acceptance frame – comes into fruition, there is nothing to reject. Different perspectives on the conditions of the world might well vie for dominance in the transitional phase, but not until there is an orthodoxy shaping the social world can there be a rejection frame.

So, the critic is *not* simply looking for a description of a radically different world, wild imaginings of what could be or even a rejection of current underlying conditions. The critic must find a line of discourse that takes the acceptance frame as a point of departure for further discussion.

This might seem obvious at first blush, but it is an important first step in appreciating the rhetorical nature of the rejection frame and the means to identify it on a page. The rejection frame is far more self-conscious than the acceptance frame. It knowingly exists in the shadow of a larger already-structured and widely distributed discourse that has ordered the social world. The rejectionist, then, strikes a position vis-à-vis aspects of the acceptance frame. "[The rejection frame] takes its color from an attitude towards some reigning symbol of authority, stressing a *shift in the allegiance* to symbols of authority" (Burke 1937 p. 21, emphasis in original). The symbols of authority in question are common elements between the two frames. The critic's next job after identifying the use of the acceptance frame as point of departure is to identify the symbol or symbols of authority that provide the pivot point in attitude that lays the seeds of a new vision of the social order under current conditions.[12]

The rejection frame is built upon a negative, an often-explicit attitude of "no" taken toward some cornerstone of the acceptance frame. At this juncture, suffice it to say that this negative emphasis is forced on the rejectionist precisely because of the dominance of the acceptance frame as Burke illustrated when he wrote: "If the king is

[12] As with most things Burkean, subtlety exists. The rejection frame is distinct from pitting different aspects – different values – within the acceptance frame against each other even if this conflict is enacted in an attitude of rejection of one of those values (Burke 1937 p. 234). The difference is whether troubling the one value creates a domino effect or is limited to raising up another aspect of the acceptance frame.

well thought of in many quarters, the man who would build his frame to accept the necessity of *deposing* the king is almost necessarily, by the tactics of the case, shunted into a negativistic emphasis" (Burke 1937 p. 22, emphasis in original). This negative stance is a "tactical disadvantage" for the rejectionist, robbing the rhetoric of the "roundness" that the acceptance frame enjoys because it is phrased in a positive view of a prevailing order (Burke 1937 p. 22).

Negating the widely distributed view of the social order requires a great effort built around the theme of "*don't* do this" and that effort phrased in the negative often leaves little room for the accompanying "*do* do this" (Burke 1937 p. 22). So, one test of whether a negative attitude has moved beyond a mere frustration toward organized discourse is the degree to which equipment for living is articulated within the negative frame. That equipment for living will begin as tools for living better or more purely under the oppression of the prevailing order, actions that point toward a new social order.

To supply equipment for living, the rejection frame must mature beyond the negative register to supply a more positive "do this instead" aspect that might be built on its negative register but offers acts worth pursuing under an attitude of rejection. Burke noted that Marxism is distinguished as a rejection frame precisely because of its elaboration into a rival philosophy of the "here and now" that provided the rhetorical resources for an entire portfolio of action (Burke 1937 pp. 28-29). For instance, Chapter 5 of this dissertation will use the phrase "eat local" and its attending social movement as an example of equipment for living produced within a new globalism.

To recognize a rejection frame in full sail, the critic must be able to identify a rhetoric of transcendence. The prevailing order must be transcended into a better future. A key feature of that transcendence is detecting the value or principle that is debased in the acceptance frame and ennobled by passing through the hierarchy to create a collective good. Some end state is envisioned as a resolution to the struggle (Brummett 1982 p. 553).

The above sections are geared toward assaying neoliberal globalism from above as an acceptance frame and uncovering the existence of a competing globalism from below as an organized rejection frame. The critic still requires a corpus of texts to study. This dissertation uses texts that talk about food, its production and consumption. Food talk is selected because it meets some criteria that must be considered when assaying discourse on a global basis.

**Food Talk as a Global Corpus of Texts**

Selecting texts for critique as the rhetorical critic looks out at a broad, complicated, noisy world is no small challenge – though it is one that arguably will be faced more often as critics attempt to make claims about a global society. Such a world produces a far larger number of texts with greater frequency and diversity than in previous eras of criticism. The stakes in textual selection rise because of the nature of sampling and the desire to say something important as Hart (1997) reminded every critic in training.

> Because the critic's focus is tight, the critic's challenge is to tell the largest story possible given the necessarily limited evidence available. So the critic is a sampler, and samplers must be both

> modest and cautious and modesty and caution are not altogether bad…What the critic gives up in scope is offset by the power of insight made available. What ensures this power? Choosing a provocative text for study, asking important questions of that text, and drawing intriguing conclusions. The critic is indeed a sampler, but that which is sampled – human discourse – is hardly trivial since people imbed in their talk some of their most complicated motivations (Hart 1997 p. 25).

Hart's admonishment is to accept that the critic is being reductive, asking a sample of texts to speak for a much larger body of texts. So, the challenge for the rhetorical critic of globalism is to maintain a tight focus on a sample of texts concise enough for analysis or presentation, yet powerful enough to speak for a world of texts. To do so, they necessarily have to come from different parts of the globe while being provocative enough to represent something quite expansive and important.

Hart's (1997) advice was to select texts that isolate a phenomenon (Hart offered the rhetoric of space exploration as an example) (Hart 1997 p. 26). In crafting a plan to *isolate a phenomenon*, the global critic requires a mechanism that scales across a globe. The isolated phenomenon must extend both upward and downward to address globalism from above so that institutional perspectives on life in a globalized world can be captured. In the same vein, the phenomenon must scale outward across the globe, some aspect of life that touches an issue of daily life not just in a single locality but lives lived in localities everywhere. The phenomenon must provide a commonplace for people in their daily lives to address – a necessity to claim that something beyond a given local perspective is captured.

The approach taken here is to choose discourse attending an exigency (the phenomenon to isolate) that arrays a variety of texts from various pieces of the social world. For this project, that discourse is rhetoric extending from food practices and agricultural development, phenomena that implicate institutions and free markets of neoliberalism and everyday life as well as biological necessity. I will justify that body of texts further below. At this juncture, I want to be clear that my textual focus is *food talk* – rather than food itself as a material substance. Said differently, I am not characterizing the planting of a seed as a rhetorical artifact and critiquing that act – but focusing on the descriptions and locutions that might attend that act.[13] Likewise, I am not looking at what actually happened in any given instance of agricultural development but the more generalized discourse of agricultural development. Whether given agricultural projects succeeded or failed is irrelevant for my purposes. Selecting food talk to define a corpus of texts builds on food's historical and structural role in globalization and trade, its role in defining culture and an increasing amount of theory involving food and global forces and an explosion of food discourses in recent years.

Barthes's (1997) view that food is "a system of communication" that must be gathered to understand the "mental life of a given society" (Barthes 29) might be seen by the rhetorician as an application of Burke's contention that humans, among other things, are "symbol-using animals." Because of its biological necessity in the human condition, food presents a powerful critical medium for reading the motivations of those communicating about food in a globalized context.

[13] I might also note that I do not foreswear ever doing such a project but that is not what I am doing here.

Food has long been implicated in globalization – as discussed in Chapter 1 – from its role in the Crusades to motivating European exploration of the world and its central role in the Columbian Exchange that spread New World foods around the world. It has also provided a rhetorical medium for creating orientations to groups and even the nation-state (see Douglas 2008, Appadurai 2008, Wilk 2008 and others for reference). The everyday nature of food, since we must all eat, also lends itself to symbol systems that might include practices as well as words (see De Certeau 1984 for an excellent overview of the rhetoric of practices including cooking). Food is also a medium for practicing forms of hybridity, what Kraidy called the "cultural logic of globalization" (Kraidy 2005). Hybridity employs a form of transcendence in which "the traditional link between 'physical setting' and 'social situation' is broken…While everyone has a local life, the ways people make sense of the world are now increasingly interpenetrated by developments and processes from diverse settings" (Held & McGrew 2003 p. 18).

Food is also implicated in neoliberalism. Localized, subsistence farming has been under assault in the developing world for decades, with agricultural sectors one of the prime targets of restructuring in emerging-world debt crises. From Latin America to Africa, the World Bank and the IMF forced the restructuring of the food sector in developing nations, demanding the elimination of subsidies, the opening of markets to Western agricultural commodities (often produced through government subsidies that are forbidden under World Bank or IMF rules for emerging economies) and the replanting of fields to produce tradeable goods rather than food that was culturally salient or, in many cases, plants that were evolutionarily adapted to the region. This neoliberal attachment is

related to food's role in organizing global systems (see Ritzer 2008, Inglis & Gimlin 2009); its role in global crises (e.g. population growth, food shortages, water shortages and the recurring disruption of food distribution during crises within dictatorial nation-states) and other issues such as the economic rise of India and China (see Roberts 2008 pp. 113-115).

In their introduction to *The Globalization of Food* (2009), Inglis & Gimlin argued:

> Food globalizations are seen to involve: *The multiple modes of interaction (e.g. connection, penetration and mutual, although not necessarily equally weighted, influencing and restructuring) of the economic, political, social and cultural dimensions of globalization (i.e. forces, processes, institutions, structures, actors, networks, etc.) as these affect food-related matters, and as the latter in turn come to affect the former, characterized by the constant generation of forms of complexity* (Inglis & Gimlin 2009 p. 9, emphasis in original).

The passage is shaped in part by lists of concepts and forces. The lists essentially give shape to food's position as an intersection point – a nexus – for many of the forces packed into the term *globalization*. In the latter part of the passage, food is seen to affect those forces and concepts and in turn be affected by them. This constant generation of forms of complexity indicates food's ability to penetrate or link aspects of the social world such as the institutional forces of globalism from above and the individuals of globalism from below. I should also note that one of the forms of interaction Inglis & Gimlin might include is people talking about food. Trentmann (2008) explored similar dynamics in observing how Fair Trade coffee and other commodities that are certified as

benefitting indigenous growers as a way of symbolically embedding distant growers into the consumption lives of Western consumers. Mintz (2008) studied how the history of Caribbean sugar connected people separated by not just distance but generational time between the English and Americans. These types of interconnections are cornerstones of the historical branch of food studies. Yet, such moralizing also enters the rhetoric of food commerce. My local Whole Foods Market sells me a narrative with my food, assuring me it is local, or that the fish I plan to serve my family was wild caught and various vendors offer brochures at the meat counter offering up a story about the animals whose component pieces are now splayed before me.

This outpouring of rhetoric is a necessary part of what Inglis & Gimlin (2009) called a "quintessential fact about contemporary food globalizations…different forces, institutions and actors are related to each other in highly complex and ever-shifting ways, and that constantly changing constellations (of people, plants, animals and objects) and social networks (involving corporations, consumers, government officials, scientists, activists and so on) breed ever more ambivalences, unintended outcomes, contestations and struggles" (Inglis & Gimlin 2009 p. 4). Food, thus, provokes much discussion of serious matters arising from the condition of globalization and it is those discussions that I propose to critique for the construction of agency.

The explosion of food discourses in the last 15 or so years coincides with the advance of globalizing forces. This explosion cuts across genres, from food on TV (Food Network, Cooking Channel and a host of other shows spread across the cable dial), food in movies (see *Ratatouille, Julie & Julia, Big Night, Chocolat* and a variety of

scholarship on such films such as Hoecherl-Aidan & Lindenfeld 2010), millions of food blogs dotting the web (many of which share a conceit of people living and cooking in a place other than where they grew up), food movements (Slow Food, "eat local") and a rise of news coverage and advocacy of problems in the global food system. Food and food discourses are also a growing source of rhetorical scholarship (see the publication of *Food as Communication, Communication as Food* 2011, *The Rhetoric of Food* 2012, a special issue of *Text & Performance Quarterly* 2009 and numerous National Communication Association panels in recent years).[14]

In short, a great many people are talking about food, from the local to the global, from policy setters to those trading pictures and reviews of what they ate last night, to the self-proclaimed food activist. We will hear from many of these people in what follows.

**Chapters 4 and 5: Framing Agency via Food Talk**

To sum up, in what follows I will seek to excavate the construction of agency under a neoliberal umbrella through a project of rhetorical criticism. The body of texts I will use are selected from discourses about food – largely people talking about food practices (such as eating local) and agricultural development. My methods of rhetorical criticism are derived from Burke's concept of the acceptance and rejection frames that make up his discursive theory of history.

The texts and critique will be presented in Chapters 4 and 5. In Chapter 4, I will critique neoliberal globalism from above. The texts will be drawn from global institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United

[14] The author has contributed to the two books mentioned and a few of the panel discussions.

Nations, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the websites of multi-national companies such as Monsanto and others. These texts will be critiqued through the lens of:

- Identifying the equipment for living that system provides to people living in their daily circumstances
- Assessing the transcendent function in the discourse, essentially what moves through a hierarchy of meanings
- Discerning the construction of agency in globalism from above

In Chapter 5, I will move to a critique of globalism from below using Burke's view of the rejection frame as a guide. The texts will be drawn from food movements such as Slow Food, from various eat local groups in the United States, from international coalitions of food and local agriculture activists, a large collection of international individuals posting remarks on a World Bank site and many others. The critical probes are:

- Assessing what links globalism from below to globalism from above
- Understanding what symbol(s) of authority are negated
- Discerning if there is a transcendent function and how it is characterized
- Excavating any available equipment for living

- Understanding how, if at all, the groundwork for constructing agency is laid

Again, it is worth noting that the real goal of this project lay in Chapter 5. Chapter 4 sets the context for understanding what is happening in globalism from below as well as the nature of the struggle – to torture my metaphor, Chapter 4 will open the umbrella. Following Chapters 4 and 5, a concluding chapter will emphasize the findings in the two competing globalisms and attempt to put them into the larger context of Burke's discursive theory of history.

## Chapter 4: *Globalism From Above: Neoliberalism's Path to Acceptance Frame*

Chapter 1 argued that a combination of globalizing forces has created a discursive condition in the world, an exigency that demands a change in the way we talk about the world and in particular the rhetorical strategies we deploy to construct agency. In Chapter 2, I parsed the literature of globalization through the lens of neoliberalism and proposed that Burke's theory of discursive history as an interplay of acceptance and rejection frames could help a critic understand the rhetorical workings of globalism from above and search for a competing globalism from below, a vision of the global social order from the global grassroots, that might combat neoliberalism's top-down view. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated how Burke's theory can be used as a critical method and argued that food provides a corpus of texts where we can spy the emerging strategies for constructing agency under a neoliberal umbrella. Burkean methods, at times with an assist from other tools, can uncover the motivations animating this groping for agency.

The current chapter examines the neoliberal umbrella, assessing its rhetorical evolution from ideology to acceptance frame – Burke's construct describing the discursive ordering of the world and directing individual action. If neoliberalism has positioned itself as an acceptance frame, what is the equipment for living that it supplies and what are the dynamics of the transcendent rhetoric that delivers that equipment for living? What are the consequences for individual agency in this framing of the social order?

In what follows, I argue that neoliberal globalism from above functions as an acceptance frame that is acutely aware of its *from-above* status. By that, I mean that as a

description of a global order, neoliberalism is first and foremost aimed at an elite audience and only secondarily addresses itself to the daily living issues of individuals. This is both a strength and a weakness for the long-term viability of the discourse. By targeting elites, neoliberal globalism invokes Thatcher's TINA message for those controlling the levers of power and paints a picture of an altruistic order creating a better future for the poor.

However, neoliberal globalism appears to rely on its elite audience to carry its message to the masses. Like Bill Clinton in Chapter 2, elites are incorporated into the neoliberal social order by preparing their companies, political territories and resources for assimilation into the global market and the competition that comes with it. There is no alternative, the discourse tells them. For individuals, equipment for living involves producing *for* the global market and consuming *from* the global market. In the case of food, farmers in developing nations are told to produce tradable commodities rather than culturally and environmentally adapted plants for the local market. Do not feed yourselves, the discourse says, buy food from the market.

It is worth questioning whether neoliberal globalism is simply on offer. Could one choose to adopt it or refuse it? Thatcher's TINA thesis argues that individuals have no choice as the conditions around them are molded by elites. Agency is also key to understanding the workings of the transcendent rhetoric that delivers the equipment for living in a neoliberal world. Global markets are set above localities in a hierarchy – starkly rendered into landscapes of affluence and poverty. Agency plays a pivotal role. It is the value that is isolated and ennobled through the hierarchy, raised out of localities

into the global market. This ennobling effect transforms agency into a strictly economic agency that solves problems of poverty attributed to localities, according to the framing of the discourse. By following this equipment, individuals are told they can transcend the limitations of the local environment. Neoliberal globalism essentially shifts the perceived capacity to affect the world out of local social units and into the market as a powerful carrot and stick to effect compliance with the acceptance frame.

It is worth recalling that the corpus of texts involves food. What could be more fundamental in establishing equipment for living than how individuals and societies feed themselves?

The main texts are chosen from a variety of sources. Those listed here are used throughout the chapter:

- UNFAO Codex Alimentarius, specifically an aptly titled section "Understanding Food Codex" in the third edition of the Codex. The Codex is a system of food regimes, standards and classifications sponsored by the UN and the World Health Organization and implemented by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Codex creates a common food regime around the world for the global food trade. It is an outgrowth of concern for quality and import/export standards arising from the 1960s as the food industry globalized.

- The World Bank food crisis website at http://www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis/. The site contains images, press

releases, white papers and the like detailing the World Bank's view of the food crisis and the need for aid, agricultural development and free market promotion in the developing world.

- The "2020 Vision" of the International Food Policy Research Institute, as expressed on its website at http://www.ifpri.org and publications such as "Scaling Up in Agriculture, Rural Development and Nutrition" (June 2012). IFPRI "seeks sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty. IFPRI is one of 15 centers supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), an alliance of 64 governments, private foundations, and international and regional organizations" (IFPRI, About IFPRI, accessed February 5, 2013).

- The World Food Programme's [sic] website at http://www.wfp.org. "WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. Food aid is one of the many instruments that can help to promote food security, which is defined as access of all people at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. The policies governing the use of World Food Programme food aid must be oriented towards the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty. The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid (WFP website, About WFP, accessed February 5, 2013)."

- World Economic Forum publications such as "Putting the New Vision for Agriculture into Action" and "Multiplying Agriculture by the Power of Mobile." In addition to the renowned Davos, Switzerland conference, the WEF has standing directorates active during the rest of the year and one of those divisions focuses on food systems and agricultural development.

- The Monsanto Corp. website at http://www.monsanto.com. Monsanto is a major global player in agriculture and a polarizing figure in discussions about the future of food. It is no exaggeration to suggest that Monsanto is the poster child of neoliberalism for food activists. Specifically, I critique passages from the "Issues and Answers" and "Improving Agriculture" sections of the site.

- The Cargill Corp. website at http://www.cargill.com. While not quite so high profile as Monsanto in global battles with food activists, Cargill is nonetheless a major global player in the food and agriculture industry and controversial enough that it feels required to offer an extensive "Corporate Responsibility" section on its site that is largely the subject of critique here.

A few other texts are mentioned along the way. In the next section, I will first tease the broad outlines of the scenic grammar from the texts. Then, I will look at its

rhetorical function and the equipment for living available in neoliberalism as an acceptance frame.

**Affluence Above, Poverty Below: Transcending the Neoliberal Hierarchy**

Recall from Chapter 3 that transcendence involves the creation of a hierarchy with at least two levels. Those levels are necessarily constructed in opposing terms, driving out nuance: This space is black; this one is white. Neoliberal globalism from above uses scenic grammar (explained further below) to shape these two spaces. The scene constructed by this grammar connects many topics as part of a mode of discourse, those include: a world defined by food in motion around the globe rather than rooted in any one culture or even the soil of a given region; calling certain types of actors into being such as global agri-businesses, global fast food purveyors and food consumers who care nothing about the provenance of their food. This scenic grammar bifurcates the world into two scenes, the neoliberal meta-world from above and a dysfunctional world outside the neoliberal umbrella – the world below, in localities in different regions. This lays the groundwork for the transcendent function as agency passes from the dysfunctional local world to the world of global markets.

Recall from Chapter 3, as well, that identifying transcendence in globalism involves a pattern of *division-appeal-resolution*. Division is created in stark terms and in neoliberal globalism, the rhetorical mechanism to create that division is scenic grammar. Setting a scene is naturally important in any piece of drama and Burke elevated that principle in his Pentad to consider how a text places emphasis and what that emphasis

indicates in rhetorical motivation.[15] In the case of focusing on scene, "...there is implicit in the quality of a scene the quality of the action that is to take place within it" (Burke 1945 pp. 6-7). A primarily scenic grammar calls certain actors and actions into being much as a theater set is appropriate for certain types of plays and characters and therefore inappropriate for other types of plays and characters. The scene both enables and limits what can happen.

Imagine a curtain rising on a stage set to resemble a middle-class contemporary living room. Such a scene does not call forth a medieval king and his royal court to enter from the wings.[16] Because the scene emphasizes the placement of things on a given terrain, scenic grammar is disinterested in specific acts and tends to reduce action to motion around fixed elements of the scene. To torture my analogy further, if the medieval entourage with knights on horseback entered the living room stage and began moving around the setting, the audience would likely focus on how they navigate the set rather than the reasons they take a certain action. Thus, the "circumference of scene is so narrowed as to involve the reduction of action to motion (Burke 1945 p. 131)." This reduction has implications for individual agency which I will develop further in a concluding section on agency.

To start slowly, consider the following passage from IFPRI's 2020 Vision for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment:

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[15] The Pentad is a set of categories for analyzing the motivations underlying texts. The categories are: Scene, Agent, Act, Agency, and Purpose. As stipulated in Chapter 1, this dissertation does not use agency in the same fashion as Burke's Pentad. The Pentad is largely the subject of Burke's *A Grammar of Motives* (1945).

[16] In the odd case in which such a procession would enter from the wings, the critic would likely reach to Burke's concept of "perspective by incongruity" to unpack motivations generating the tableau.

> IFPRI's 2020 Vision is a world where every person has access to sufficient food to sustain a healthy and productive life, where malnutrition is absent, and where food originates from efficient, effective, and low-cost food systems that are compatible with sustainable use of natural resources (IFPRI website, Accessed 1/30/13).

The notion of a vision for "a world where" certain things exist is our first clue that scenic grammar is at work. The focus is a world, an environment where certain things exist. Even though people are the first details offered about that world they are nothing more here than a passive detail of that world, like noting a tree standing in a meadow in a landscape painting. These people are just components of the scene, equivalent to the rest of the description of attributes of this world as envisioned. Other words such as "systems" or "environment" also signal the scenic grammar. Systems operate under their own logic, incorporating some elements or rejecting other elements as somehow not fitting the scene. Likewise, an environment is conducive to some elements and not conducive to others. Both *systems* and *environments* call certain things into existence within their circumferences and deny resources for existence to things that are not compatible.

The key is that the organizing principle of the text is the scene as opposed to other things that might well populate the scene but are not the rhetorical focus of a text. Said differently, scenic language maintains a wide-angle lens on the social world rather than sharpening the focus on any one aspect of the scene. The same signals and landscape view are evident in this passage from the United Nations Food and Agriculture

Organization's "State of Food and Agriculture 2012" report. It is quoted at length to demonstrate the wide-angle scenic view while noting some details along the way.

> Farmers' investment decisions are directly influenced by the investment *climate* within which they operate. While many farmers invest even in unsupportive investment *climates* (because they may have few alternatives), a large body of evidence discussed in this report shows that farmers invest more in the presence of a conducive investment *climate* and that their investment is more likely to have socially and economically beneficial outcomes.
>
> The existence or absence of a conducive investment *climate* depends on *markets* and governments…In the absence of an enabling *environment* and adequate market incentives, farmers will not invest adequately in *agriculture* and their investment may not yield socially optimal results. Indeed, building and maintaining the enabling *environment* for private investment is itself one of the most important investments that can be made by the public sector.
>
> The elements of a good general investment *climate* are well known, and many of the same factors are equally or more important in the enabling *environment* for agriculture: good governance, macroeconomic stability, transparent and stable trade policies, effective market institutions and respect for property rights (FAO, The State of Food and Agriculture 2012, emphasis added, accessed 1/30/13).

Even though this is a lengthy passage, the pattern of scenic grammar is evident. We are not talking about people or acts unless they support or are called into existence by an *environment*, a *climate* or *market*. These are spatial referents. Even the term *agriculture* functions scenically rather than as a way of feeding people; it becomes a space of endeavor. The final points in the passage that enable the environment – good governance etc. – are simply attributes of the desired scene. They are also, of course, essential elements of the neoliberal world view as seen in Chapter 2.

These spatial referents are used in many places to frame the discussion of hunger or agriculture or desperately poor people. One IFPRI paper discusses an action plan through describing a series of "spaces" that must be considered in addressing food issues and scaling: institutional space, policy space, fiscal and financial space, political space, partnership space, learning space and so on (IFPRI June 2012). The World Economic Forum echoes this scenic grammar as well when it speaks of its own vision that "has the potential to deliver increased employment, expanded access to nutritious and affordable food, and sustainable resource use. The result can reinvigorate rural economies, providing sustainable livelihoods for several hundred million smallholder farmers and a resilient source of economic growth for countries around the globe" (WEF New Vision for Agriculture, p. 2). The WEF is simply describing a certain scene in this passage. We do not appreciate details of what these happy farmers do or how this nutritious food is grown because we do not need those elements to recognize a scene that seems desirable on its face.

Maps of the world also abound on these websites. In fairness, global organizations using world maps as anchoring graphics carries its own practical logic. The map symbolically positions the organization as carrying a world view or purview. With that said, these graphics symbolically claim a mission and naturalize this scenic grammar through an everyday image of the world. The Cargill site, for instance, anchors its extensive Corporate Responsibility section with a map of the world showing the company's many sites of community projects (http://www.cargill.com/corporate-responsibility/world/index.jsp, accessed February 5, 2013). The map not only creates the

impression of a company with a global footprint, it positions Cargill's neoliberal globalism from above reaching into local communities to transform them, a dynamic I will address momentarily.

The World Bank food crisis site features a map of the world colored to reflect different levels of malnutrition in different nations (http://www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis/, accessed February 5, 2013). Maps are simply the most tangible symbolic construction that creates these distinctions between regions of the globe. Having established the scenic nature of the grammar of neoliberalism's mode of discourse, I turn now to the functions of this scenic grammar: the bifurcation of the world into two scenes and creating a hierarchy out of those scenes – a well-functioning orderly scene that is under the neoliberal umbrella and a dysfunctional one that is not.

As globalization has ensued over the last 50 years, the Codex Alimentarius has grown in depth and breadth, calling forth certain kinds of people and creating an orderly global market.

> Creating standards that at once protect consumers, ensure fair practices in the sale of food, and facilitate trade is a process that involves specialists in numerous food-related scientific disciplines, together with consumers' organizations, production and processing industries, food control administrators and traders. As more people become involved in the formulation of standards and as the Codex Alimentarius – including related codes and recommendations – covers further ground, so the commission's activities are becoming better known and its influence strengthened and widened (Codex 3).

Two key elements of the scenic grammar defining the Codex are showcased in the above paragraph. Here, actors are called to work on the standards required to rationalize

food regimes around the world so that food commodities might flow freely through the neoliberal global economy. In some cases, the Codex calls actors into existence somewhat explicitly. "The membership of expert consultations is of critical importance…For this reason, great care is taken in the selection of experts invited to participate. Those selected must be pre-eminent in their specialty, have the highest respect of their scientific peers, and be impartial and indisputably objective in their judgments (Codex 23)." The Codex, we are told, defines a stage on which only certain types of actors are qualified to play.

The Codex is described as covering certain "ground" (Codex 3) a word that Burke specifically called out as an example of scenic grammar with philosophical undertones as in "On what grounds did he do this? (Burke 1945 p. 12), a search for the fundamental substance that generated an act. In the same vein, the Codex speaks of nation-state officials consulting the "ground" of the Codex before taking action in setting their own food regimes (Codex 4, 22, 33); those laws that the Codex calls into being at the nation-state level are called into existence by the Codex, adding that nation-state to the landscape it defines. The Codex notes that it transformed the international food trade playing field by "harmonizing" these food regimes that had become barriers to trade (Codex 30). The Codex sets out a wide range of standards and practices that ensure the safety of the food trade among nations. As scenic grammar, these standards are analogous to the sofas and chairs on the theater stage in my earlier example of scenic grammar. Food in motion need only thread its way through these landscape elements, no agency or action required. By eliminating the agency of nation-state actors, the Codex

has created a "ground" of "harmony." As that ground expands, more are called to the happy place defined by the Codex.

Burke equated scenic grammar with a materialist philosophy (Burke 1945 131) and a unique materialist philosophy is discernable in the Codex's formulation of globalization. Only those things within the circumference of its meta-world are considered meaningful. That which is outside the neoliberal umbrella is a separate scene bereft of the benefits of globalism from above. The Codex, like a lot of neoliberal globalism texts, is no doubt aimed at elites. This is particularly true of texts that create the second poverty-stricken scene, the debased level of the transcendent hierarchy. Here, elite audiences – often clearly Western elites –are exhorted about the value of the global market and raising others out of the poverty that is depicted in local environments. Said differently, the *appeal* of the neoliberal argument is toward elites. Look at these two scenes, it says, which one would you choose for your people: orderly global markets where people can thrive, or the chaos and poverty outside of markets?

Poverty-stricken locales and struggling people are part of the description of this second scene in local environments, drawn as a stark contrast with the space of markets. Recall the shaded map on The World Bank global food crisis site (http://www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis, accessed June 6, 2012). Above the map is a rotating series of images of malnourished women and children huddled around a communal bowl of food or carrying crops.

The people are clearly indigenous to the areas highlighted by the map, marked by their headdresses and clothing as seen in the image above. These are not World Bank

administrators or anyone who might be invited to Davos. They are in scenes that are often pre-industrial in their composition though no doubt trucks and tractors are somewhere near, outside the chosen frame.

The children in these photos eat communally in a field, not in a restaurant. The fact they are children but dressed like the woman in the previous image has a leveling effect, juvenilizing all. Accompanying the rotating images are hyperlinks to press releases on local communities either in need of aid or already receiving aid from the World Bank. The people in those local communities are not constructed as agents, but as passive receptors of aid from the World Bank and its agencies. Consider this press release on the World Bank website about efforts in West Africa[17]:

> **WASHINGTON, May 31, 2012—**More than 17 million people are facing possible starvation in West Africa's Sahel region, the zone skirting the southern portion of the Sahara Desert. The crisis is due to a combination of drought caused by poor rainfall in 2011, too little food, high grain prices, environmental damage and large numbers of internal refugees.

The problems in the Sahel region are all local according to the World Bank's construction. It is a *local* zone in the lower register of the hierarchy, outside the neoliberal umbrella. It is an environment that needs help to come under that umbrella and be fully assimilated into the world of free markets and abundant food. Here again, we see the elite audience in play. The people in Sahel are simply parts of the landscape.

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[17] Press release on Sahel region of Africa: http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:23208924~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html

They have no agency. So, the implied appeal is not for them. The appeal is targeted toward those with some power. Here, we see that the value being isolated for transcendence comes into play in the appeal. Neoliberal globalism isolates agency as the value that moves through the hierarchy.

A video on the World Bank website animates this transcendent argument, from division to appeal and resolution. Called "For the World's Hungry, Put Food First" the video carries this model of a scene of malfunction that must be cured by assimilating it into a world of free markets. The video is constructed with stark animated images and bold block letters.

It sets a scene of poverty-stricken people who spend most of their income on food, resulting in malnourishment and crippling sickness. The scene is summed up with these words rendered simply in successive screens:

- **So what is going on here?**
- **Hungrier world +**
- **Extreme weather +**
- **Inefficient farming +**
- **Poor Harvests +**
- **Closed markets +**
- **Volatile Prices =**
- **Expensive Food =**
- **More poor people**

The video starts with the lower register, the local environment, in the neoliberal globalism hierarchy. As people are added to the video they are made to be consistent with the scene: a dysfunctional scene (by neoliberal standards) calls dysfunctional people into existence. In Burke's words, the construction creates a "correlation between the quality of the country and the quality of its inhabitants" (Burke 1945 p. 8). Their farming methods are inefficient and their markets are apparently closed. Exactly what is meant by "closed" is not really spelled out, though a central claim in the video is that food prices are too expensive, driving 170 more people into poverty every minute. The data is not presented with any context, yet it is heart tugging even without sourcing and shape. It is also indicative of an appeal to those already incorporated into the market system, an appeal to support further neoliberal efforts to bring these unfortunate people under the neoliberal umbrella. The video presents the complete transcendent argument from division to appeal to resolution.

This dichotomy in scenes is drawn in stark contrasts and sets a problem that must be solved through rationalizing the two scenes. Neoliberal globalism establishes a self-reinforcing circle of logic through its transcendent argument as the UN Food and Agricultural Organization's leader indicates in this passage from a press release marking the opening session of the 39th Session of the Committee on World Food Security.

> Speaking at the opening session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Rome, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), José Graziano da Silva, declared that 'important progress' had been made in cutting the number of hungry people by 132 million since 1990. He added that the proportion of those hungry in the developing world also fell in the

> developing world from 23.2 per cent to 14.9 per cent over the same period (UN press release, accessed 1/30/13).

Even though many people are referenced, they are just part of a scene. Yet, these are unique people. They have transcended the dysfunctional scene and entered the neoliberal world where they have enough to eat. Resolution is a powerful aspect of neoliberal globalism. How can any rational person argue against a social order that lifts people out of poverty? One might add – "Especially when there is no alternative social order?"

Globalism from above encourages a transcendence upward in Burkean terms, from the dysfunctional world to the pristine world of free markets and the global flow of commodities. This meta-world is overseen by science as a benevolent god in the same vein that Adam Smith's "invisible hand" ensures the sanctity of free markets for neoliberal discourse. That transcendence is a feature of neoliberal discourse that can be seen quite explicitly at times as in this excerpt from the 2013 World Economic Forum keynote address by International Monetary Fund leader Christine Legarde.

> In a sense, this is really an old lesson for a new era—that when countries transcend the narrow national interest and come together for the global good, everybody wins. This was the reason the IMF was founded in 1944—and it remains our guiding principle (Legarde, January 2013, from IMF website accessed 1/30/13).

While not directly about food, the quote directly addresses the transcendence upward from local environments to the global market. The nation-state is now too "narrow," Legarde tells us. Concerns previously limited to the nation-state level can now

rise further, to a higher plane meta-world where problems can be solved. She offers another audience identifier when she says "when countries transcend..." local interests they can solve problems. This is an admonishment for those creating policies. It is a new era for policymakers and leaders and interests are no longer so narrow but can encompass the globe. This is another signal that neoliberal globalism from above is well aware of its *top-down* approach to the world. The discourse takes credit for progress on poverty and casts its operational policies as altruistic, reinforcing the resolution aspect of the transcendent rhetoric. Using the word "transcend" is obviously a signal of the transcendent function at work, though this function animates other terms such as the following passage from the WEF food directorate.

> Achieving the New Vision requires sustained commitment over many decades, and to realize it on a global scale will require many countries to undertake ambitious efforts to transform the productivity and sustainability of their agriculture sectors (WEF New Vision for Agriculture, p.7).

Here, the word *transform* stands in for *transcend*. The upward movement is also apparent as it will require ambition and time to evolve beyond the constraints of the present. The word "commitment" also indicates audience again. These are people already converted and there is an apparent fear that some might look for alternatives to neoliberal globalism, something that – of course – goes against the TINA thesis explored in Chapter 2. This notion of the difficulty of the project undertaken is repeated later in the document in a similar usage: "Orchestrating a broad-based, systemic transformation can be extremely challenging. By definition, an ambitious transformation requires stakeholders to go beyond business as usual, acting outside of traditional roles and

structures and collaborating in new ways" (WEF New Vision for Ag p. 10). Here, *transform* is accompanied by "go beyond" as yet another discursive unit of transcendence. We also are told again that bringing everyone under the neoliberal umbrella is not easy. Leaders of nations have to stay the course.

The preceding passage also introduces "scale" as a benefit to the top-down formula. By transcending the local, scale is achieved and scale is unequivocally good. This transcendence upward movement animates the language of the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative.

The discursive unit of "scaling up" is found in different places, often associated with the SUN initiative. In the following passage it is the UN secretary general channeling the transcendence upward in an excerpt from a speech given at UN headquarters.

> The Scaling Up Nutrition initiative has support from more than 20 countries. They understand that food and nutrition security is a human right. They know that food and nutrition security drives economic, social and human development. And they have detailed plans for Scaling Up Nutrition. Over 100 agencies and organizations have endorsed the SUN Framework that sets out the Movement's approach. The lives of millions of children are at stake. We can help them realize their physical and intellectual potential (Ki-moon, UN site, accessed 1/30/13).

Scaling up is a trope that channels the transcendent function. It is a metonymy that reduces the transcendent function into a discursive unit that can be deployed in a variety of contexts. This notion of scale is a transcendent construct that accompanies the

upward movement through the hierarchy, from smaller to larger scopes of endeavor. It is also a scenic term, indicating that a larger playing field is both enabling and ennobling. Agency, in this construction, is found in big things that, by definition, cannot fit into the limited scope of local environments. Neoliberal globalism claims that agency results when individuals scale out of the local dysfunctional world into the efficient meta-world.

The Codex Alimentarius – as both document and taxonomy – accomplishes this scaling up by removing the discussion of food from its local, grounded context to the world of free markets. Its transcendent function is perhaps summed up in this passage: "It is difficult to imagine a world without the Codex Alimentarius. It has been said that if the Codex did not exist, somebody would have to invent it (Codex 37)." The Codex claims that it has so transcended the chaotic world of nation-states and localities that no other world is imaginable (TINA strikes again). The Codex's scenic grammar describes an environment that transcends the mixture of local worlds as the globe was organized before the Codex. Before the Codex, the world was chaotic, a place of competing nation-state food regimes where various agents and acts created instability. The Codex created a stable ground for food in motion. Scale is good, according to the Codex.

The Codex is not static as its circumference grows by rationalizing other scenes (within nation-states) to its own contours. Food that passes through this landscape of meaningful elements can be trusted. In effect, that food has transcended its previous existence in a physical, cultural space. Once again, neoliberal globalism emphasizes resolution to persuade people of the rightness of its appeal.

The highly stylized World Bank video discussed previously has a transcendent resolution in its denouement. The video ends by offering a prescription that lifts people from the dysfunctioning local world into the larger well-functioning global scene as described by the continuing title cards:

- **Invest in better agriculture**
- **Support small farmers**
- **Link farmers to markets**
- **Open trade**
- **Protect the poor**
- **Help the hungry**

Despite the strong verbs deployed, the language is still rendered in scenic grammar. Essentially, these steps bring the poor into the world of markets, a much better, healthier and happier place to be. At the beginning, dark outlines of figures are shown to be sick, unable to work to support themselves as adults or learn in school as children. Following the transcendent shift to the world of global markets, people move about and children kick balls in play. Crossing the barrier between the two scenes created by globalism from above is a popular aspect of the rhetoric. Cargill uses this move to illustrate both upward transcendence and the dangers of the other obvious way of constructing the social world.

> The world will always raise the most food the most economically and in the most environmentally responsible way when farmers plant the right crops for their local climate and soils using the right technology, then trade with others for the benefit of all. If every

> country set a goal of food self-sufficiency, the world would have much less food (Cargill.com, Solutions and Responses, accessed February 7, 2013).

Here, Cargill invokes the well-established economic principle of comparative advantage (it is directly asserted in the preceding paragraph above this passage). The principle holds that any community, state or region should build what they do best ("best" often defined as cheapest) or offer whatever they possess in the greatest abundance and trade that commodity, good or service to satisfy all other needs from others who offer the best they have to offer. This is the transcendent meta-world. Scale is implied here with the phrase "most food." Once again, scale is good. It is particularly good because it creates trade, so the argument goes. To achieve that scale – and that goodness – the "right crops" have to be planted. Global markets come with a logic, the argument implies, and to achieve scale you cannot plant what you want or what you would naturally put on your own plate. Cargill asserts that a lack of transcendence is correspondingly bad for everyone. If you choose to be self-sufficient, you are hurting people around the globe, they will have "much less food." You are either within the circumference of globalism from above or you are outside it. To resist transcendence through a desire for self-sufficiency within nation-state borders is actually harmful to everyone.

This last point from Cargill also touches on equipment for living. Neoliberal globalism's top-down approach clearly places a high premium on an elite audience.

Since Cargill also sells to producers, there is a message here aimed at individual farmers as well that might be summed up as: "Trying to feed yourself first is not altruistic. It is selfish and others will suffer for it." One of the overriding messages of globalism from above is to avoid self-sufficiency in a local environment and rely on markets to provide goods rather than the earth or the toil of one's own labor. Individuals are treated as both producers and consumers in neoliberal globalism, as long as they are under the neoliberal umbrella. This message arguably works for those who might engage in growing their own food in the developed world as well. The equipment for living in this social order is to rely on markets. Even the kitchen garden, by this logic, arguably robs the world at large of valuable resources for the selfish act of feeding yourself.

**Equipment for Living: Depend on Markets, Look Upward**

With a scenic grammar controlling the mode of discourse, equipment for living is perhaps the weakest link in globalism from above as an acceptance frame. The equipment for living is dependent on the scenic grammar's mechanism for calling certain people and behaviors into existence that are consistent with the scene as described. In the following chapter, I will trouble this idea further in describing globalism from below, or a bottom-up grassroots approach to globalizing conditions. At the moment, suffice it to say that it is worth questioning whether there are enough tactical everyday discriminations in the discourse to sustainably equip people for living in a globalized world when it is a scenic grammar that creates this meta-world. It is also worth questioning further the reliance on elite audiences inherent in a top-down approach. Will

those elites carry the message to the masses with equipment for living discernable? Or is the coercive power of the state and its policymaking function the source of its greatest influence? The answer is somewhat dependent on what audience is in play and what equipment for living is in question.

To set the context, the analog worth recalling is Burke's description of equipment for living under the Medieval Synthesis period described earlier. The metaphor of family relations cut across the European landscape of social relations, but also instituted a hierarchical relationship structure that created the social obedience to authority necessary for a world regulated by the Catholic Church and a feudal society ostensibly ordained by God. Likewise, the primary equipment for living in globalism from above is to look to markets for solutions to needs (look upward to follow the transcendent path, if you will). In the same vein, problems need to be viewed as the failure of market mechanisms or the failure to support efficient markets. Only then can transcendent solutions be conceived. However, it is a much more fragmented world today than during the Middle Ages, even more fragmented than the Cold War world in the 20th century. In the Middle Ages, the Church arguably relied on elites in the form of priests to carry its message of universal equipment for living encoded into a familial grammar. Even so, those elites were omnipresent in local lives, reinforcing the discourse weekly through the medium of the sermon and the people were conditioned to attend those services. This unity of medium is more difficult even for elites today.

Fragmentation also extends to living conditions between the developed world and emerging nations. To maintain consistency in equipment for living between someone in

Los Angeles and someone in Africa is not so simple as calling everyone "brother" and "sister." Also, equipment for living between elites and people living their everyday lives might have significant overlap – everyone should rely on the market, for instance – yet there are some distinctions inherent to different audiences. Relying on the market for African farmers includes a prescription for what to plant. The message aimed at the upper middle class here in Austin, for instance, is to support efforts to incorporate everyone under the neoliberal umbrella. Contradictions existed elsewhere in neoliberal discourse, so these elements of fragmentation might not be existential in nature. They do, however, become more salient when the critic is assessing the challenge of neoliberal globalism's ability to maintain a consolidated acceptance frame across the globe in a fragmented world.

To start slowly, let us first look toward equipment for living that is relatively clear and common across the globe. These include points of committing to the market and believing in the altruism of neoliberal globalism.

This equipment for living can be found encoded into tropes threaded through the texts under study as the connective tissue in the system of meanings. It is worth touching on how the trope *scaling up* from the previous section on transcendence carries this equipment for living. IFPRI echoes this drive to scale as a directive. "It is now becoming clear that both innovation and scaling up 'what works' are critical" in the world (IFPRI Scaling up in Agriculture p. 1). The problem requires scale to solve and scale is not to be found within the confines of a local ecosystem. Likewise, Cargill

denigrates self-sufficiency as misguided versus doing a single thing well that can be traded in global markets to satisfy other needs.[18]

*Food security* is another trope – a metonymy – that commodifies globalism from above into a circulating discursive unit. Food security is about a market mechanism – access – that is simply part of the landscape of the meta-world and a lack in the everyday world of the below.

> Food insecurity is defined by the USDA as a lack of access by all members of a household to enough food for an active, healthy life. Monsanto is part of Invest an Acre, a program that allows farmers to donate a portion of their harvest to help combat food insecurity in the U.S. (Monsanto website, Growth of the World Population, accessed 1/30/13).

This passage uses *in*security to define the notion of food security in market terms. Access is part of a functioning market where supply and demand meet, where cash is available to fund transactions and desired goods are available without friction. Food security defines what would appear to be a public good. Who could argue against *food security*? For its part, Cargill lists barriers to food security.

> Many interrelated factors contribute to the complexity of food insecurity around the world today, including supply disruptions; government policies that inhibit trade and negatively affect farmers; growth in nonfood use of crops for biofuels; the impact of agriculture on the environment; under-investment in research and development; and price volatility (Cargill.com, The Issues, accessed February 7, 2013).

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[18] Other places where this equipment for living can be seen at work is in Brummett's idea that the rhetoric of style is built on capitalist markets as a foundation of the social world at this juncture in history. Also, much has been written about social capital which is a metaphor where the analogic structure has collapsed leaving a discursive unit of a quasi-tangible substance that defines value in social relations.

Each of the items listed is either a failure or disruption of market mechanisms. Food security, therefore, is about adaptation to markets – or transcendence upward in Burkean terms. To achieve the good, market mechanisms must operate and behavior should reflect them. Plant rice and corn, not sweet potatoes in Africa, and buy from the market no matter where the food came from if you live in the developed world. This speaks to the altruism of the market and the need for commitment across the globe. In fact, failures of market mechanisms are constructed as clear evidence that hungry people should focus even more on markets as seen in this World Bank press release.

> International food prices have spiked three times in the last five years. Even before the major food price volatility that began in late 2007, hundreds of millions of people suffered from chronic hunger and malnutrition…
>
> In response to high and volatile food prices, donors and developing countries are working together to increase agricultural productivity, improve food and nutrition security, and better connect farmers to markets so that they can sell their crops and increase their incomes (World Bank.org "Japan and Republic of Korea Pledge Additional $60 Million to Boost Food Security in World's Poorest Countries" accessed February 7, 2013).

Note the emphasis on increasing incomes rather than feeding yourself. That is the equipment for living at issue – *not* how to grow food but farming for profit through tradable commodities. Increasing income increases market power for purchasing food, the preferred move for sustaining oneself versus farming for local consumption even when the context of the comment is agricultural development. This notion of sustaining life through reliance on markets is one of the strains of neoliberal globalism that elites

carry through to the masses, albeit in fits and starts. Chapter 2 noted how US President Bill Clinton expressed his ambivalence toward to the bare-fisted competition among nations and their citizens seen in the post-Cold War world – all while committing the nation to that path. He also signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, known widely as welfare reform but the legislation laid the seeds for reforming the food stamp program. Personal responsibility, one of neoliberalism's atomizing tenets, underpinned some of the debate in 2013 and 2014 around the US SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) program, the updated version of the food stamp program.[19] The program was cut by $8 billion as part of legislation, known as the Farm Bill, that doles out subsidies to major agri-businesses (O'Keefe 2013). SNAP is lumped into a group of social safety net programs that puts the poor into "a hammock that lulls able-bodied people to lives of dependency and complacency, that drains them of their will and their incentive to make the most of their lives" according to US Rep. Paul Ryan, a former vice presidential candidate (Chait 2013). The theme is hit even more directly by US Rep. Steve Southerland, Republican of Florida, who preaches what he calls the "Gospel of Work" and opposes SNAP benefits that do not require work of one type or another, reinforcing neoliberalism's ethic of personal responsibility (Saslow 2013). Yet, even here, we can see the episodic and self-selecting nature of this pass-through message to the masses. Not only are these people in the US, the Left/Right schism in the US indicates that only those already predisposed to

[19] The updates include debit-style cards at the checkout counter to reduce any perceived stigma of visibly counting out food stamps in public.

listen will hear the personal responsibility message. In pointing this out, I do not intend to ignore the issues of the coercive powers of those who control spending and can compel compliance by the masses. I only point out that sustaining its hegemony requires more of neoliberal globalism than preaching to the converted. It needs to continue delivering equipment for living or it leaves open the possibility that another discourse could provide that equipment.

**Whither Agency?**

Much of this chapter has shown how agency is bound up with the transcendent movement in neoliberal globalism. Yet, it is worth emphasizing how it works one last time before exploring the bottom-up view.

Scenic grammar drives out agency of the individual characters involved. They are called into existence to conform with the scene and their actions are rationalized within the scene's landscape. In that light, one might think of a scenic grammar as describing a pinball game. The ball might look as if it is an actor on the scene of the pinball table, but it actually has no agency and is simply in motion within a predetermined environment. The limits of the pinball table are the limits of the circumference of the game. Even the purpose of the player of the game, who is nominally outside that environment, is entirely determined not by the ball but by the elements arrayed on the table's circumference; so a text of what happens in a pinball game would be difficult to write using, for instance, an agent-centered grammar. Under scenic grammar, it is the scene that calls any agency (flipping a bumper or wiggling the table) into being and into motion around fixed,

immovable elements of the scene. Are you playing the machine or are you simply acting in the only ways the apparatus offers you to behave?

Agency flows upward in this globalism from above. Institutions have it. Markets have it.

> While some of the successes were serendipitous, there is little doubt that a systematic and deliberate approach in defining the scaling- up pathway is more likely to result in the effort being pursued and achieved successfully. AKDN, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Oxfam, PepsiCo, and the Global Fund have worked this way for some time, and now the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative are also pursuing a systematic approach. It helps to consider explicitly who or what are the drivers of the scaling-up process and how obstacles can be removed or spaces created so the initiatives can grow (Linn, IFPRI, Lessons of Scaling Up: Opportuniites and Challenges for the Future, June 2012, accessed 1/30/13).

Institutions have agency in the meta-world, according to this IFPRI document. This passage lists several institutions of varying categories. It is their job to solve the problems in the world, in localities dotting the globe. The passage even channels the scenic grammar of the landscape pointing out that it takes institutions to ensure the "systematic" approach, signaling the view of the meta-world as a *system*, a scenic term. Elsewhere in the document, this view of institutional agency is even more explicit.

> **Institutional space.** A pervasive theme of the briefs in this series is the need for effective development and deployment of institutions that can carry forward the scaling-up process. The institutions that have promoted the original innovation or pilot may not have the capability to scale up or managethe initiative at scale. Special institutional capacity may have to be found or created. Often, many institutions are involved and need to cooperate or be

> coordinated. Institutional rivalries may prevent effective leadership of the process, and decentralization of governmental responsibility, now frequently promoted in developing countries, may interfere with effective leadership by national ministries. And yet the successfully scaled-up initiatives described in this series demonstrate that with imagination, persistence, and selectivity the institutional space can be created. [Another author in the series] concludes that the best approach is to focus from the outset very deliberately on the institutional choices to be made and the capacity-building needed for the chosen scaling up pathway (Linn, IFPRI, Lessons of Scaling Up: Opportunities and Challenges for the Future, June 2012, accessed 1/30/13).

One of the tasks of institutions is to reach down from above and work to bring more people into the meta-world. That institutional agency is seen in this text somewhat explicitly and the text also points to other texts commissioned by IFPRI that make the same claim. Earlier in this chapter I noted how individuals are described by neoliberal globalism as passive, backwards and needing help. This can be seen even when the farmers themselves are ostensibly the subject of the communication as can be seen in this report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) entitled "Sustainable Agricultural Productivity Growth And Bridging The Gap For Small-Family Farms."

> The recommendations in this report call upon the G20 governments to take action on increasing agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner in their own countries, but also to support non G20 developing countries in their efforts to address the challenges global agriculture faces…
>
> A successful strategy for sustainable agricultural productivity growth requires significant improvements in macroeconomic, structural, and agricultural policies and institutions to provide the necessary incentives to farmers and the private sector to increase investments and build the necessary capital (OECD, June 2012).

While the passage is ostensibly about small farmers, all the agency is in the hands of institutions as this passage suggests. It is the institutions who have to help to get the farmers moving. To revert to my pinball analogy, they are the spring-loaded plunger that sends the individual farmers into motion. The institutions raise the farmers to the meta-world; they do not get there themselves.

The rhetorical construction of institutions is reminiscent of the implied rationale in the US Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision that recognizes corporations as people. With the playing field expanding to circle the globe, larger agents have more value than smaller ones. In Burkean terms, institutions have been called into existence and endowed with agency denied to individuals.

**Conclusion**

This chapter argued that neoliberal globalism from above is more than just an economic ideology. Its structure has evolved to animate a Burkean acceptance frame, an assimilating force in organizing the social world at this moment in discursive history. Because of its rhetorical structure, this acceptance frame relocates agency in a transcendent movement from individuals in local environments to institutions capable of striding the planet and the markets where they play. Anyone seeking agency is required to scale up to the meta-world of the market.

The discourse is somewhat self-conscious of its from-above perspective, targeting first elites. Elites hold the power and can implement legislation and policies that reinforce neoliberalism. Those with money to spend in the developed world also provide the currency that keeps the neoliberal project alive. So, there is a logic to this elite focus.

Acceptance frames have an economic component, a transactional quality necessary for their full realization. Burke grudgingly admitted as much in *Attitudes*.

> When beginning this book, we tended to resist the purely 'economic' interpretation of history. We felt that the rise of great imperial integers [sic] could only be explained by reference to some 'spiritual' force. But as we proceeded, we found the economic emphasis inescapable…it still seems that the upbuilding of an empire as a whole can only be explained by economic factors (Burke 1937 p. 115).

These factors involve economics as a theoretical framework. It is not about dollars and cents, per se, but a currency nonetheless that creates value and attracts people to what he called "the bandwagon effect" (Burke 193, p. 115). As more people come on board – assimilated into the acceptance frame's world – the inherent value in the economy defined by that system of meanings expands and the risk in resisting it expands as well.

Yet, the very success of the acceptance frame ultimately lays the groundwork for a rejection frame, a mirror image of sorts and that is where I turn next in this hunt for agency. Said differently, the bandwagon effect can cut both ways. In this chapter, I argued that if globalism from above has a weakness it is in the central equipment for living offered to people in their everyday lives. Can a rejection frame disrupt the bandwagon effect and/or lay the groundwork for what happens when globalism from above reaches its own Malthusian limits?

## Chapter 5 *The Rejection Frame: Equipment for Living, Transcendence Downward and a Theory of Rights*

This chapter is the real impetus for this project – discovering the possibility for a construction of agency that is both outside the nation-state liberal democracy framework and possesses the potential for operating around the world, as relevant in Cincinnati as it is in Nairobi. At the outset, it is worth recapping the steps to reach this point.

In Chapter 1, I argued that the discourse of citizenship that has provided the resources for constructing agency for many people over many years has eroded in its grasp of actual power as globalizing forces have undermined the centrality of the nation-state to the global social order. Globalization, a long-standing process, had created an exigency by which the way we describe the world and our own ability to affect the world through the discourse of citizenship and the tools instantiated by that discourse (e.g. voting) is no longer in sync with the conditions of the world. In Chapter 2, I argued that neoliberalism – an ideology that puts markets at the center of human life and distrusts the state – has asserted itself as a social order without alternative in the post-Cold War world and it is this form of globalism that emphasizes markets and institutions over individuals and nation-states that has undermined the discourse of citizenship. That ideology is so widely distributed that it has passed into the category of *common sense* – a reality so evident it is not worth discussing – and has influenced many other attempts to understand the social order from different perspectives. In Chapter 2, I also argued that the rise and fall of discourses that shape the social order was at the heart of Burke's *Attitudes Toward History* (1937) and his theories of how such discursive paradigms work could shed

rhetorical light on what's happening in the early 21st century and how one might uncover any emerging grassroots strategies to reconstruct agency under a neoliberal umbrella. In Chapter 3, I unpacked a method from Burke's work for assaying acceptance and rejection frames and their rhetorical underpinnings.

In Chapter 4, I analyzed the workings of neoliberal globalism as an acceptance frame, Burke's concept of the discourse that shapes the social order. The chapter argued that neoliberal globalism functioned as an acceptance frame that is acutely aware of its status as a top-down view of the social order, extending from elites and aimed at elites as its first and foremost audience. The equipment for living it offers is that individuals should join markets as producers and consumers, eschewing providing for themselves directly. The discourse uses agency in a transcendent rhetoric that isolates agency and moves it out of local environments and into a meta-world of global markets; agency is constructed primarily as a capacity to shape the world that is possessed by global institutions rather than individuals. Action that affects social organization occurs in the meta-world created from above and is carried out by institutions, by the tenets of discourse from institutions such as the World Bank, the United Nations and several other global institutions and multi-national corporations. By this discourse, those on the ground, in local circumstances, are passive and require the aid of those institutions to join the meta-world of markets and capital flows that enable people to feed themselves. Chapter 4 also suggested some vulnerability for the future of neoliberal globalism in the area of equipment for living since people laboring in everyday life are a secondary audience, the first target being the coercive power of the state and elites.

Chapter 5 shifts the perspective. Instead of attempting to understand the motivations and strategies of elites looking upon the world from the top-down, this chapter assesses the view from the bottom-up. In this chapter, we hear from the grassroots, from African farmers complaining of being told to plant corn where corn did not evolve to grow effectively, from social movements based in far-flung places such as Brazil and Italy, from US consumers moralizing their purchases of locally produced food.

The texts under consideration come from a variety of sources: individual rhetors, social movements, loosely organized activist networks and groups both local and global in scope. Below is an overview of the primary texts and/or categories of texts used in the following analysis.

**World Bank hosted food crisis conversation**: Anchored by an April 2011 live webcast by BBC newsperson Matt Frier, the World Bank hosted an online forum where people could post suggestions, ideas and various comments about a food crisis involving poverty and the inability for people to buy food. This online event spawned a lengthy series of posts from people around the world (see http://live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions). Posting under the heading "Your Food Crisis Questions & Solutions," they are individuals in localities responding to the World Bank and neoliberal globalism in general. The postings number in the hundreds from roughly 90 nations. The individual writers are named though their roles in the food crisis – whether farmer, academic, activist, interested party or government representative is not always clear. While the context enunciated by the World Bank on the site had hoped for constructive solutions to the food crisis, the posts are largely hostile to the World Bank, but have

many constructive suggestions involving the usage of resources that originate *from above*. In the context of the current project, posts are treated as individual texts rather than part of one large text. In other words, a posting from a farmer in Tanzania has equal analytical value as a one from a consumer in London and they are treated as two distinct utterances. It is a way of adding individual rhetors to the range of texts under consideration. These posts provide a way of isolating individual voices from below to balance more organized efforts from social movements and non-governmental organizations. As such, they are treated as discrete texts below rather than segments of a single larger text.

**Slow Food Movement**: Slow Food is a global movement built around local food traditions and culture. It is a distributed discourse organized out of Italy. In what follows, the main website is treated as a text under study as well as companion sites around the world as the movement has spread to other nations such as the United States. Passages are used from both the original global source based in Italy as well as local chapters. "Slow Food is an idea, a way of living and a way of eating [.] It is a global, grassroots association with thousands of members around the world that links the pleasure of food with a commitment to community and the environment (www.slowfood.com, accessed February 23, 2013)." The movement claims more than 100,000 members organized into 1,500 *convivia* (local associations) around the world.

**Food sovereignty texts**: As will be demonstrated in what follows, *food sovereignty* is a trope of grassroots globalism from below that is directly articulated against the trope *food security* explored in Chapter 4 as a locution of globalism from

above. Food sovereignty provides a discursive rallying point for groups loosely organized through the Internet, connected by their embrace of the sovereignty trope. Texts are studied here from multiple sources such as: The Food Sovereignty Network and various contributors to the network such as the Nyelini newsletter[20]; an academic web-published book, *Towards Food Sovereignty: Reclaiming autonomous food systems* (2008) from the International Institute for Environment and Development; and several documents associated with the World Social Forum and a set of treaties aimed at creating a rhetoric of rights within globalism from below. The texts range from web pages to e-books published on those sites and that distinction will be made as individual texts are analyzed.

**Eat Local texts**: Though thematically resonant with the Slow Food movement, eat local texts come from many sources both organized and individual. Here, I pull from websites of different kinds, sometimes an eat local group in a given community and their official website, and sometimes individual postings in the comments sections of blog posts and other material on those sites. They are often quite *localized* in nature (i.e. produced by and about a specific community or food-producing area) and can be either implicitly or explicitly opposed to globalism from above and the globalized food industry. One source of eat local texts penned by different individuals from different areas of the United States is the blog Eat Local Challenge (www.eatlocalchallenge.com), offering a variety of voices curated by an editor who posts frequently herself. Other texts

[20] The name "Nyeleni" refers to a piece of Malian history that at least bridges on folklore about a woman who fought for recognition as both a woman and a farmer in a patriarchal society. The legend/person provides a symbol for a portion of the food sovereignty community.

used here come from eat local supporters in Texas and elsewhere in the United States. The texts under study include passages from the sites posted by the organizations, bloggers and sometimes comments posted by viewers of those various sites.

The rejection frame assayed here takes its point of departure – as the methods detailed in Chapter 3 predicted it would – from Burke's contention that an acceptance frame begets a counter discourse that grows in reaction to the acceptance frame (Burke 1937 p. 21). This relationship between the rejection frame and the acceptance frame identified by Burke sufficiently approximates my own idea that – if it can be reconstructed at all – agency will first have to bloom under a neoliberal umbrella. This parallelism makes Burke's rejection frame a useful tool for my hunt. Conceptually, the rejection frame is a useful analytical tool regardless of whether a completely articulated discourse is discovered or the finding is limited to discovering the emergence of some of the frame's components, especially as they might pertain to the construction of agency. Recalling Chapter 3, those components are:

- The rejection frame recognizes that an acceptance frame exists
- The rejection frame involves a negation of authority symbols at the core of that acceptance frame
- The rejection frame supplies equipment for living under the same material conditions, yet living differently from the assertions contained in the acceptance frame
- The rejection frame generates a transcendent rhetoric that operationalizes the frame in everyday life

- And for my purposes, the frame contains or generates a construction of agency or a theory toward that construction

The above bulleted list is also a rough approximation of the chapter's flow. I say "rough" simply because, like the acceptance frame's underpinnings in Chapter 4, these points overlap, sliding into one another and the chapter attempts to isolate them for analytic purposes while not denying this slippage. In what follows, I argue that globalism from below functions within the Burkean theory of discursive history as a rejection frame – and more. Globalism from below is built on a rejection of the transcendence upward of agency and a negation of the authority of global institutions to dictate life in local lifeworlds. It is currently fueled by a theory of agency rooted in the language of rights and is highly dependent on the Internet to spread its discourse. Essentially, globalism from below employs a casuistic rhetorical strategy, attempting to extend a shard of the nation-state narrative of citizenship into a globalized world and reformulate its meaning through a network of grassroots connections brokered by the Internet.

In many ways, though, globalism from below is making a bigger claim than just rejecting neoliberalism in the current historical moment. Globalism from below is decades behind neoliberal globalism from above in consolidating and circulating a discourse and this fact has important implications by Burke's theory of discursive history – organizing discourses wax and wane over time to be replaced by new organizing discourses. This globalism from below is gathering momentum and is using the Internet to spread its discourse and link groups and regions in recovering agency in a globalized

world. Globalism from below adds a temporal element by casting a future reformulation of the institutional complex of neoliberal globalism from above – capital resources, technical knowledge and the power of the state – into a bank of resources available to those from below with the control of those resources firmly in the hands of people in their local environments.

**The Rejection Frame: Resistance, Negation and Linkage**

This section's job is to show that the first two objectives of a rejection frame in the above bulleted list are operating in grassroots food talk: globalism from below understands that neoliberal globalism exists and shapes the world, thus recognizing that an orthodoxy is established; and this grassroots discourse actively seeks to negate or debase certain symbols of neoliberal authority to establish a heresy under the umbrella of orthodoxy. "'Rejection' is but a by-product of 'acceptance'…" Burke wrote (Burke 1937 p.21). "It is the heretical aspect of an orthodoxy – and as such, it has much in common with the 'frame of acceptance' that it rejects." Said differently, rejection can only become an attitude once an orthodoxy exists. Just like an orthodoxy of Roman Catholicism had to exist for there to have been anything that could be labeled *heresy* in the Middle Ages, globalism from below is constructed with the full knowledge that it is counter to the reigning discourse.

It is important to note that the rejection of a *symbol* does not necessarily refer specifically to a tangible incarnation of authority such as a person, place or thing. Concepts wield authority as well and the attitude of rejection can vector off such a concept. For instance, Burke noted that the rise of 19th century anarchists in the US

coincided with the temporal standardization of life through railroad schedules and early industrialization (Burke 1937 p. 113). Rejection frames are born in this negation, but strengthened into rival philosophies by articulating some definable acts – the discursive units of "do this instead" – that provide equipment for living.

Recall that the acceptance frame charted in the previous chapter constructed two scenes – one from below that is a place of dysfunction and poverty, while the world of free markets and global institutions is constructed as a utopian meta world. For the acceptance frame, this distinction between global markets and institutions and local environments is a key step in creating a hierarchy as part of its transcendent rhetoric. Globalism from below acknowledges this construction of different scenes as part of a hierarchy.

It is an important first step because it demonstrates that even though much is made out of *the local* as opposed to *the global* in popular and some academic discourse, globalism from below is a globalism – i.e. a structuring of the social world on a planetary scale. Consider this passage from a draft treaty of the Rio+20 conference organized under the auspices of the World Social Forum for a UN conference.

> The world comprises many economies, at many levels—not just the global economy, or the national economy, but a plethora of regional and local economies as well. Any alternative economic system should promote all these economies, and not just the current capitalistic---corporate mode of globalization…What is also needed is a vision of a nested system of community, sub-regional, and regional sustainable economies, in a diversity of settings, which stands on a foundation of integrity, accountability and a much more equitable distribution of benefits. Such a nested system of sustainable economies should be structured on the basis of the principle of *subsidiarity,* such that decisions and activities

> that can feasibly be undertaken locally, should be. Only when decisions are required that cannot be made at a given level of society will decision-making move to the next higher level – from the community to the sub-region to the region to the world. The core idea is that all these economies are made sustainable, not just a drive to maintain a singular monopolistic and dominant global economy. (People's Sustainability Treaty on Sustainable Economies, June 2012, prepared for Rio plus 20 conference)

This passage takes the acceptance frame as point of departure, an acknowledgement of the way things work and moves in the direction of negating some of the authority symbol of the acceptance frame. The writers of the treaty envision a quite complex world, yet the context they set at the start is a global economy and more localized *economies* in the plural. It does not deny the existence of globalized institutions and structures or roles they might serve. As a scenic grammar, it describes a world composed of tiers of responsibility and authority spanning from the local tier to a more globalized tier. The existence of scenes beyond the local is not in question in this treaty prepared by a loose coalition of individuals and groups aimed at combating neoliberalism. The writers also acknowledge the current orthodoxy whereby the global players are in control and that control is infused with neoliberalism as evidenced by the desire for an "alternative economic system" and describing a migration of decision-making practices from the global to the local as the default mode of operating a globalized system. Yet, that future locus of control is a hope or aspiration, not today's reality. Today's reality is a harsher world defined by those operating top-down and those

struggling from the bottom-up, according to this poster on the World Bank food crisis site:

> One way of attaining food security is for countries to move away from the IMF/World Bank imposed models of producing cash crops for export at the expense of growing enough food locally to feed its populace. Dan Ingreji, United Kingdom (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions)

Here again, the dominance of the acceptance frame is acknowledged. The writer calls out institutions of global capital and the hierarchy they impose. In so doing, the writer also demonstrates the debasement of those symbols of authority in the acceptance frame, the supporters and framers of the global market such as the World Bank and the IMF. The acknowledgement of the acceptance frame as orthodoxy is often bound up with a blistering critique of how things work under neoliberalism. At times, the postings on the World Bank site assign blame for the world as it exists to those structures and institutions operating from above.

> Individuals should take care of neighbours [sic] and states/governments [should operate so as] to guarantee the people's access to food. Cruel market fails to ensure human needs. Production, stocks and distribution of food should be maintained by global forum like the UN. There is no other way for the humankind to share benefits of tech and risk as well to survive and thrive. Khawaza Main Uddin – Bangladesh (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions)

This post on the World Bank food site takes us to the other side of the world from the previous post. Here, there are prescriptions and admonishments for various actors. The two-scene construction of the world is evident: Good guys and bad guys come with implied locations in the above/below hierarchy. The writer positions individuals and

neighbors as local (i.e. in a neighborhood). Every other actor is beyond that local neighborhood and is either part of the problem or a potential solution. The lionized "market" of neoliberalism is labeled as "cruel," a comment that tips toward the negation of authority symbols in the rejection frame. The nation-state should operate in a certain way, implying that the writer believes it does not operate in that benevolent way at the moment. The UN – a quintessential global player – has a role to play ensuring an equitable distribution of food. There is a role for non-local actors and structures, according to this Bangladeshi. If the UN controlled various resources on a global basis, then a better world might be called into existence. Most of the prescription of what needs to change according to this posting targets actors and mechanisms from above. The market is cruel and is beyond the local neighborhood.

Elsewhere on the World Bank site, the market is a "failure" even though it is glorified in the acceptance frame (Muhammad Nawaz, Pakistan; live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions). This construction of the failure of the acceptance frame and the institutions in global capital carries through on the World Bank site as those from below describe problems and solutions that exist in different physical and conceptual places.

> …there are so many aspects of the puzzle, that if we want a global solution, we need to take global actions. Our whole economic system has to shift to a "Resource Based Economy". We already know which part of the planets [are] more favorable for cattle, crops, grazing, fishing…we also know the laws of erosion and soil depletion. If we could create this global map of natural resources, and grow our food according to these resources, rotating when necessary, where the food would be abundant and accessible to all, and would neither be driven by international market value, nor by

> the world food price…Food, as much as water, air and anything necessary for the human survival should not have a monetary value on it. We have the technology and knowledge to feed the planet. Only the MONEY is holding us back…India Roger – Ireland (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions, emphasis in original)

This passage eloquently blends the dialectical tension of the two-scene construction. This post promotes a global view of problems and solutions and the problem is that there is a neoliberal orthodoxy as signified by the rhythmic references to neoliberal symbols such as "MONEY" (emphasis in original) "international market value" and one of the most prized ideas of neoliberalism all the way back to Hayek – the centrality of the pricing mechanism as a way that markets govern themselves. The post pulls the above and below scenic hierarchy through to a direct debasing of the authority symbols of the acceptance frame. The solution is global which presumes the problem is global as well. The post refers to a map, however the "map" in question is one of local resource networks not simply a global playing field as maps referenced by the World Bank and other institutions did in Chapter 4. Once again, this is a scenic grammar attempting to call a certain structure of the social world into existence. That structure appreciates global resources, but positions the real solution on the ground in a network of local environments that can be rearticulated with a global view of the needs of those in these localities. Like globalism from above in the previous chapter, a bifurcated world is described. The world that could exist is one where the most relevant scene is local, according to this Irish poster. Yet, the description of the operation of the world is more a brokered cooperation among localities. That description of a potential social order casts

light on the use of the term "we" in the post. Even though this is a post on a World Bank site, part of the audience here is presumed to be the grassroots. "We" does not refer to the global institutions of neoliberalism but to others in their local environments. There is a sense of mission here that is developed across the texts from the grassroots of globalism from below. It speaks to the reformulation of the base hierarchy of the meta-world in globalism from above and the local environments that make up the world below.

This theme of reinvigorating local environments runs through globalism from below, such as this World Bank posting from Kenya.

> We must also reinvent the prestige of our resilient traditional crops which were almost sacrificed upon introduction of new ones which may need [enhanced] management in the farm and after harvesting. – Njoroge Maina, Kenya (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions, emphasis in original)

"We" also stands out here. The audience is clearly in localities given the reference to "our" traditional crops. Those crops do not belong to the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund and certainly not to Monsanto. Here we can see a notion that local knowledge needs to be valued and provide the starting point for anything that comes after. This Kenyan offers a call to action to build or rebuild a local scene that has been undermined in prestige and bespoiled by misguided management policies. Those policies have come from global institutions that drove the insertion of new crop types – corn, rice and other tradable commodities – that are not well adapted, they need "management" throughout the growing and harvesting process. This is a recurring claim among food and agricultural advocates; neoliberal policies required pulling up traditional

crops because there was no massive global demand for them as tradable commodities. From the standpoint of rejection, this move is a negation of the authority symbols. Remember in Chapter 4, the global market brought localities out of poverty by incorporating them into a world of tradable commodities. Part of the rhetorical shift in focus to the local inherent in globalism from below is the claim that the forces of globalism from above misunderstand these local networks of culture and small-scale economics precisely because local economies are less formal, less structured and more organically social (with no irony intended) than the highly rationalized, ruthlessly efficient markets fetishized in the utopian meta-world.

Scale is a dialectical concept in this battle over the proper view of the way to organize the social order. Consider this passage from the web book *Towards Food Sovereignty* (2008); the passage follows a detailed breakdown of the millions of people involved in small fisheries, farming in developing nations and those involved in mobile pastoralism and the raising of livestock.

> However, none of the above figures for farming, pastoralism, forestry and fisheries account for all the additional livelihoods and jobs associated with…food systems. Each link in the food chain offers economic niches for many more people—as millers, butchers, carpenters, iron workers and mechanics, local milk processors, bakers, small shopkeepers and owners of food outlets…The livelihoods and incomes of a huge number of rural and urban dwellers are thus dependent on the local manufacture of farm inputsand on the local storage, processing, distribution, sale and preparation of food. Even in affluent Western countries such as the USA, the UK and Italy, there is strong evidence that…food systems generate many jobs and help sustain small and medium-sized enterprises (Pimbert 2008 p. 10).

The passage is a thoughtful indictment of neoliberal globalism from above's denigration of the local scene as a place of dysfunction. This author describes a thriving local economy that scales outward and – to some degree at least – upward though still largely providing economic goods to local citizens. Once again, globalism from below can be seen standing globalism from above on its head, changing the perspective on how scale operates effectively in a globalized world. It is not that the local scene is irrational and chaotic, as global institutions held in Chapter 4; they simply function under a different logic than neoliberalism according to this writer. This valorization of the local is found in many texts of globalism from below as will be seen through the course of this chapter. That favorable view contrasts with neoliberal globalization from above that constructs the local world as a place of poverty, disease and dysfunction. The negation of the neoliberal utopian meta-world's symbols and the data upon which it makes its argument is a key thread tying together this network of grassroots statements on what's wrong with the orthodoxy of the neoliberal umbrella.

Consider this passage from a call for a food sovereignty conference put forth by the Forum for Food Sovereignty.

> This political will has also opened the doors to the unbridled monopolization and concentration of resources and productive processes in the hands of a few giant corporations. The imposition of intensive, externally dependent models of production has destroyed the environments and livelihoods of our communities. Furthermore, it has created food insecurity and has put the focus on short-term productivity gains using harmful technologies such as GMOs.

> The results have been the displacements of peoples and massive migration, the loss of jobs that pay living wages, the destruction of the land and other resources that peoples depend on, an increase in polarization between rich and poor and within and between North and South, a deepening of poverty around the world, and an increase of hunger in the vast majority of nations (Food Sovereignty: A Right For All—Political Statement of the NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty, call for 2002 conference in Rome on foodsovereignty.org site, accessed February 20, 20130).

This passage quickly checks the boxes for recognizing the above/below, bifurcated hierarchy of the world and the negation of the neoliberal globalism authority symbols. Resources are concentrated in the hands of a few "giant corporations" according to this call to action. "Externally dependent models of production" have been imposed from without and here again is the hand of neoliberal global institutions and corporations. The term "externally dependent" production models appears to contain the idea that incorporating localities into the global market through tradable commodities undercuts self sufficiency, something Chapter 4 demonstrated that neoliberal globalism specifically sought to debunk. This particular negation of the utopian meta-world pulls no punches. It claims the world valorized by globalism from above is corrupt and the responsibility for any dysfunction lay with the very institutions and policies valorized from above. This culpability includes the exact problem, food insecurity, globalism from above claims to seek to alleviate. It attempts to turn the trope of food insecurity back on neoliberal globalism from above. The term "food sovereignty" will shortly move to the center of study as it is bound up with the theory of agency struggling to arise from the

grassroots.

The negation of the authority symbols in globalism from above is essentially a negative register that cuts across Burkean grammars from below. Consider this more agent-oriented passage from the World Bank food crisis site.

> Food futures markets are being flooded with hot speculative capital which is fueling the current food price rises and also amplified the price hikes of the 2008 food crisis. The European Union are about to publish their proposals to regulate this sort of excessive speculation and it would be good to see government like the UK back these regulatory proposals. The role of financial speculation in driving up food prices cannot be ignored and needs to be tackled if we are [to] see food prices restored to levels which are stable and affordable for the world's poorest people. Heidi Chow – United Kingdom (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions)

This posting characterizes various aspects of the meta-world: financial markets and speculation, supranational entities such as the EU and regulatory frameworks that might be put into place. On the one hand, some of these forces from above are the culprits for the dysfunction of a globalizing world. The World Bank is often targeted directly in these posts since it is that institution's website supplying the medium for comment. Yet, the dysfunction is the product of numerous entities and forces, many argue, and their actions have impacts whether in concert or random. Note that the EU gets some credit for taking action to curb unfettered speculation in global markets. Even so, the core institutions of the meta-world constructed in globalism from above are the culprits. Action is urged and one action that can be taken is to avoid buying into the meta-world discourse.

> One way of attaining food security is for countries to move away from the IMF/World Bank imposed models of producing cash crops for export at the expense of growing enough food locally to feed its populace. Co-operative farming plots would be one way of ensuring that villages produce enough for themselves. Stopping the abuse of WTO rules by large multi-nationals and stopping subsidies by countries to price out farmers in small countries is another area that needs immediate attention. Dan Ingreji – United Kingdom (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions)

This posting from the World Bank thread intersects many subtle themes as writers grope through the connections between people on the ground and this collection of forces from above. The writer names culprits in the form of corporations and nations such as the U.S. that subsidize corn and other food commodities. The writer also touches on the recurring charge that agricultural development promulgated from above has driven local land to be planted in tradable commodities – "cash crops" – in the global economy rather than culturally-specific and ecologically-adapted foodstuffs to be consumed locally. Writers like this one suggest that the academic categories of "globalism from above" and "from below" belie the complexity of the emerging social world in globalizing times. Cooperative farming could be organized, for instance, with the help of officials or organizations. Individuals must grope toward some operationalization of the relationship between the individual on the ground and forces from above – yet do so on their own terms by "stopping subsidies" and establishing cooperation among villages.

This section has argued two basic points toward identifying a Burkean rejection frame. First, that we can identify the overlap with the acceptance frame through the construction of two scenes on the global landscape, that controlled by neoliberal forces

and the localities dotting the planet. Further, the existence of neoliberal globalism as an established orthodoxy – the umbrella effect in this dissertation's title – is part of that overlap. Second, this section has argued that the negation of authority symbols within an acceptance frame – markets, global institutions and multi-national corporations, the pricing mechanism in this case – that Burke predicted would accompany the formulation of a rejection frame is in evidence. Those themes will carry through other texts analyzed in what follows and will be noted along the way as these subsequent texts also help tease out other aspects of the rejection frame. The next section examines the equipment for living produced by the rejection frame.

**Equipment for Living: Eat Local, Buy the Right Stuff, Do the Right Thing**

As I noted in the previous chapter, if globalism from above has an exploitable weakness as an acceptance frame it is in the area of equipment for living. The transcendent movement of agency from daily life on the ground to institutions in the meta-world reduces activity in daily life to motion and radically undermines intentional action. Relying on markets for everything operates at about the same level of abstraction as the medieval imperative to bow to authority that Burke charted (Burke 1937 p. 128). Yet, the present section describes a rejection frame that offers relatively concrete equipment for living. Said differently, doing *nothing* for yourself is an imperative that might well be vulnerable to a movement that can create pleasurable experiences and a sense of community from doing *something* for yourself. Pleasurable experiences also enjoy support from certain market forces – and food is an intersection of this *do it yourself* ethos, movement discourse and media both old and new. In this section, I turn

from the negative register in globalism from below to the equipment for living it circulates.

The argument here is relatively straightforward but no less important for its simplicity. Globalism from below emphasizes intentional acts rather than the motion of relying on markets to provide all goods and food provides tremendous ingredients for the recipe of this discourse. Whether eating local through farmer's markets, cooking from scratch, buying fair trade coffee or a host of other activities, globalism from below offers equipment for living. I contend that this emphasis on acts at least impinges on the construction of agency in the struggle with the neoliberal umbrella acting as an acceptance frame. Talk of acts provides rhetorical resources for constructing oneself as possessing the capacity to take action in the world.

The equipment for living charted here often falls in line with de Certeau's idea of a society that draws on a storehouse of suppressed practices to create an "anti-discipline" against the prevailing normative socio-cultural disciplines (de Certeau 1984 pp. *xiv – xv*). De Certeau's idea fits the rejection frame concept in that it recognizes that an orthodoxy arises from time to time that displaces certain practices – acts – that become small bits of resistance that can be put into daily practice. The idea underpins this Ethiopian's post on the World Bank food site.

> What we need is to go back to the drawing [board] and appreciate that power is in the numbers and you realize that if we empower everyone who can farm especially subsistence farmers then we will be able to have a world which can feed itself. This is how the world was like 40 years ago and the world was able to feed itself. Perseverence F. Ganga – Ethiopia (live.wordbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions)

This Ethiopian poster recognizes that things have changed as a result of a neoliberal globalism that has pushed subsistence farmers off their farms or told them to buy from markets rather than feed themselves. He or she claims that we need to recover some of that storehouse of knowledge and practice. Acts also have an impact through scale, the writer argues. We need to empower "everyone" because "power is in the numbers" for changing the world – a world that can feed itself through this new focus on feeding yourself first. This post puts much of what follows into a single place.

In effect, this rejection frame contains a significant component of equipment for living, ways to operationalize the rejection frame on a daily basis. This wealth of equipment for living suggests that globalism from below is beginning to mature as a discourse. Said differently, there is a common sound to globalism from below.

In Burkean terms, globalism from below contains a significant thread of act-based grammar. Burke argued that when an act and the motivation for the act appeared to be one in the same, the act represented a paradigm of action (Burke 1945 p. 66). These intentional acts bring this paradigm of action into being and are distinguished from the mere autonomic motion without intention that predated the act. Acts are novelties rather than the routines of a prevailing social order. An act-based grammar indicates a motivation to break the prevailing orthodoxy in more than just the transitory moment of an act in the same way that any creation myth changes the nothingness or chaos that is

the backdrop of the act of creation.[21] An attitude toward acts is an attitude toward generating things (Burke 1945 p. 252). In the hunt for agency beneath the neoliberal umbrella, these paradigms of action provide the discursive equipment for living. Or, as Burke wrote, attitudes as symbolized by linguistic constructions, can "be the first step towards an act. Thus, if we arouse in someone an attitude of sympathy towards something, we may be starting him on the road toward overtly sympathetic action with regard to it" (Burke 1945 p. 236). So, a rejection frame that offers up a rich tapestry of actions to be taken to step out of the neoliberal umbrella, is identifiable as a step toward constructing the capacity to affect the world, or *agency* which will be taken up in the next section.

This equipment for living is amplified around the world in numerous ways. Consider this passage from the movement website and blog Eat Local Challenge.

> Fair-trade with other cultures, localities and regions is fair game. Circumvent the globalized economy for the items you truly need from other regions by establishing fair-trade exchanges. It is not that we don't care about farmers and ranchers elsewhere, we simply don't wish to see middlemen gaining more of each consumer dollar than the producers do. Producers inevitably plow money back into their communities and lands, intermediaries seldom do. (Gary Nabhan, Eat Local Challenge.com, "Deepening our sense of what is local and regional food," accessed February 24, 2013)

Nabhan is a well-known food scholar and activist. The post is in the negative register through its exhortation to circumvent global markets and the indirect charge that

[21] Burke's use of creation as a model for understanding the construct of act and motivation as one would apply to most creation myths. That said, his construction is influenced by the Judeo-Christian myth where Christian philosophers such as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas have made the idea of a perfect act explicit.

multinational companies extract money from local producers rather than invest. Beyond the negative register, however, the post is a litany of actions to be taken and the tone is largely positive for those actions and the world they could summon. "Fair-trade" is essentially a compound verb here rather than a descriptor of certain commodities. An implied *you* as a subject is implored to "circumvent the globalized economy" acknowledging the prevailing orthodoxy and acts that circumvent it. Local people "plow" money back into the local economy, an implied debasement of global institutions or actors such as Monsanto that take from the local lifeworld. Things to do – whether out of resistance, exploration, fixing obvious problems or some form of pleasure – abound in globalism from below. The Nabhan blog post has a long string of responses from readers including this one from a denizen of farmer's markets who goes by the pen name *opoponax*.

> …here in the Northeast our farmer's markets stay open year round with whatever is available seasonally. Yeah, in January your options tend to be apples, potatoes, cabbage, beets, and turnips (as well as local meat and dairy products). And that gets repetitive.
> One solution that's been talked about a lot on this blog is canning and otherwise preserving seasonal foods for later in the year. This is obviously hard to do when you're first starting out, but with a little forethought it's really not hard at all. This year when basil was in season I bought heaps of it and spent an afternoon making big batches of pesto, which are waiting in my freezer to top pasta when I get tired of squash soup, turnip and potato au gratin, apple-and-cheese panini, etc. in the coming months. Next year I'd like to do the same with heirloom tomato sauces and soup.
> Also, some seasonal produce is very long-lasting…You can stock up on them now, and keep using them until the dead of winter (The opoponax, comment posted on Gary Nabhan's blog post on Eat local challenge.com, posted November 1, 2007; accessed February 24, 2013).

This northeasterner lists several acts in this post. One can shop at farmer's markets. One can cook with seasonal foods. One might address the winter doldrums of fresh vegetables through buying a lot of any favorite vegetable in season and canning them. Then, the farmer's market shopper/home cook/home canner can use the product of his or her own labors during the winter rather than resort to the conventional grocery store. Note how these individual acts are articulated into a paradigm of action beyond the simple process of food shopping, cooking and eating; one builds upon the other. These individual acts have meaning that is amplified by their articulation into a paradigm of action. In addition to being a good example of Burke's act-based grammar, this post also channels de Certeau's idea that the prevailing power order pushes numerous behaviors out of the mainstream, thus creating a storehouse individuals can draw on as acts of resistance to the prevailing discourse, a neoliberal discourse which Chapter 4 demonstrated debunks this same do-it-yourself action the *opoponax* proclaims. It is what Michel de Certeau (1984) termed "making do," assembling acts with rhetorical meaning in a milieu increasingly not of your own making. Food is one of the richer sources of those meaningful acts, according to de Certeau (1984).

> Dwelling, moving about, speaking, reading, shopping and cooking are activities that seem to correspond to the characteristics of tactical ruses and surprises: clever tricks of the "weak" within the order established by the "strong," an art of putting one over on the adversary on his own turf…Perhaps these practices correspond to an ageless art which has not only persisted through the institutions of successive political orders but goes back much [further] than our histories and forms strange alliances preceding the frontiers of humanity. (de Certeau 1984 p. 40)

Certain acts are fundamental, de Certeau contended, and it is the everdayness to those acts that allows them to be imbued with meaning and articulated as a language. We all must eat. Eating involves an articulated set of practices (read "actions"). Here, buying directly from farmers, canning vegetables and even cooking serve the purpose of resistance to the prevailing discourse and its imperative to rely on markets. The individual plucks particular practices from this storehouse precisely because they create meaning beyond their moment of implementation.

This paradigm of action can be seen in other instances of eat local discourse. In Austin, Texas, the Sustainable Food Center (SFC) coordinates farmer's markets and other eat local events. The following passage is from a website detailing an eat local festival and describes the SFC.

> **Sustainable Food Center** (SFC) cultivates a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food—envisioning a food-secure community where all children and adults grow, share and prepare healthy local food. In addition to producing three of the area's largest farmers markets, SFC's programs include Grow Local, Farm Direct, The Happy Kitchen and Sprouting Healthy Kids (www.edibleaustin.com, announcement of Eat Drink Local Week 2012, accessed March 13, 2013, emphasis in original).

SFC here proclaims that it *cultivates* community, *strengthens* the food system and *improves* access to food. These are acts articulated into a paradigm of action through their articulation one with another. Through that articulation they become something larger – a paradigm of action – that is larger than any one act.

That paradigm of action, then, has a purpose here described as calling a certain

world into existence and that world is described as one where food security reigns and children and adults grow, share and prepare healthy food. The creation metaphor is here relatively explicit – SFC's paradigm of action will create this better world. The Chef's Collaborative, which identifies itself with the tagline "Local. Sustainable. Delicious." also channels the creation construct in its grammar. "Our vision: As a result of our work, sustainable practices will be second nature for every chef in the United States" (www.chefscollaborative.org, About, accessed March 13, 2013). One can read act-based grammar in the notion that its *work* will create a paradigm of *practices*. It is also clear that a new world will arise "as a result of our work" channeling the generative aspect of the act-based grammar. Those practices then will create a *second nature* for a segment of the population.

My local farmer's market, here in Austin, demonstrates this act-based motivation despite being a stylized scene of its own. The farmer's market has a sense of place, certainly, surrounded by towering condos and construction projects in downtown Austin. Reading it as a text, though, the market is a site of action. People buy food as one would expect. However, this food is not just fuel for the next autonomic dash into industrial society. The purchase is a meaningful act. Signs adorning various booths and stations emphasize action-oriented verbs: *Go* Local. *Go* Texan. *Recycle*. *Rescue* [various items] from the Landfill. *Growing* Vegetables God's Way. Thank you for *supporting* local farmers.

What's more, people ask the farmers for tips on things they can do in their own gardens. Others inquire about volunteering on the farm. In short, the grammar of the

farmer's market is an act-based grammar despite the market's physical existence as a scene carved out of an urban environment. This act motivation carries through on all eat local sites surveyed for this project. Consider this passage from the home page of Colorado Local First:

> Every dollar you spend is an investment in something. If you'd like more local food choices that nurture our local economy, here are a few things you can do:
>
> 1. **Read the Labels**: Find out where the stuff you're buying comes from and seek out local products, knowing your dollar will have a deeper impact.
>
> 2. **Visit Farmers' Markets**: One of the best ways to find the freshest food in season, you also have the unique opportunity to meet the people who grew and raised your food.
>
> 3. **Join a CSA**: Community Supported Agriculture creates a close relationship between you and your farmer and allows farmers to choose what to grow with less debt burden.
>
> 4. **Grow Your Own**: Encourage more edible plants to flourish in your yard, patio or window sill and enjoy the deliciousness of a sun warmed tomato from your own home.
>
> 5. **Ask Restaurants Where They Source Their Food**: This strengthens the connections between growers and retailers, and helps business owners know what you want (www.coloradolocalfirst.com, Why is eating local food so important, accessed March 13, 2013).

Once again the paradigm of action is clear. Browsers are encouraged to *do* things. Each of the five bullets starts with a strong verb and verbs pepper the explanations of those bullets. Permutations of the eat local trope exist. Consider this passage from the

website for a community-supported agriculture program in California.

> Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a way for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from a farm. What could be more local and better than supporting the educational and community farm right here in Sunnyvale!
> If you are unfamiliar with the concept, here are the basics: a farmer offers a certain number of "shares" to the public. Interested consumers purchase a share (aka a "membership" or a "subscription") and in return receive a box (bag, basket) of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season.
> *What do you get out of it?*
> Cook with the freshest food, with all the flavor and vitamin benefits.Get exposed to new vegetables and new ways of cookingVisit the farm, consider volunteering, see the chickens.Observe your children starting to favor food from "their" farm – even veggies they've never been known to eat.Develop a relationship with the farmers who grow your food and learn more about how food is grown (http://www.fullcirclesunnyvale.org, home page, accessed March 13, 2013).

Once again, a series of individual acts create greater meaning through their articulation into a paradigm of action. Buy from farmers. Cook with fresh food. Observe your children loving their vegetables. Develop relationships with farmers and educate yourself. Do all this in your own community.

Eat local is a widely distributed discursive unit of globalism from below. It is easy to highlight the word "local" and assume the scene is the emphasis. However, I argue that "eat" is the real emphasis in the locution and any familiarity found in the term is a sign of success for globalism from below and the equipment for living it circulates.[22] For a crude approximation of its widespread nature, a simple Google search of the term

[22] I made a thumbnail sketch of this argument in "'Food Talk': Bridging Power in a Globalizing World", a chapter of *The Rhetoric of Food* (2012 pp. 58-70).

*eat local* returned 710,000,000 results at this writing (search performed March 13, 2013). By contrast, a simple search of *Monsanto* returned 21,500,000 results, *Pepsi* returned 117,000,000 results and *McDonald's* returned 191,000,000 results (all searches performed March 13, 2013). The paradoxically wide distribution of the eat local trope effectively provides a means of linking many localities on a global scale. This network linking is a primary way globalism from below circulates, even more so than globalism from above where powerful institutions connect in certain hallways of power from the United Nations to the World Bank headquarters. Globalism from below does not command those edifices and its equipment for living spreads through the poaching of global structures such as the Internet. The Slow Food Movement is a great example of this reliance on networks versus institutional power. Slow Food is a global movement based on local food. Slow Food's act-based grammar begins on its home page (www.slowfood.com).

Across the home page are the main content links for the site, two of which are about acts: *What We Do*; and *What You Can Do*. As content links, they promise to take you to pages of additional acts. A main graphic describes the slow food ethos as paradigms of practices – a way of living and a way of eating. Under the *what you can do* link, web surfers are encouraged to become a co-producer, an identity that is enacted.

> Co-producers support local farmers, fishermen, breeders, cheesemakers etc, not only purchasing their products but also tapping into the wealth of information and advice and they can offer us. In this way we can learn more about quality and increase our understanding of what a healthier, tastier and more responsible diet means in our region (www.slowfood.com, "Be a co-producer," accessed March 13, 2013).

The identity of *co-producer* comes with equipment for living. You support local producers and it is through your consumption that you attain the identity of a co-*producer*, a juxtaposition of terms that appears to come with no irony for the movement. Said differently, how you consume can be an act of production. This act-based grammar carries through the many levels of Slow Food as a global movement made up of local actors. Here it is on the Slow Food USA site.

> In the United States, members of Slow Food USA's 225 chapters (as part of a global movement) celebrate the amazing bounty of food that is available, and work to strengthen the connection between the food on our plates and the health of our planet. Our members are involved in activities such as:
>
> - Raising public awareness, improving access and encouraging the enjoyment of foods that are local, seasonal and sustainably grown
> - Caring for the land and protecting biodiversity for today's communities and future generations
> - Performing educational outreach within their communities and working with children in schools and through public programs
> - Identifying, promoting and protecting fruits, vegetables, grains, animal breeds, wild foods and cooking traditions at risk of disappearance
> - Advocating for farmers and artisans who grow, produce, market, prepare and serve wholesome food
> - Promoting the celebration of food as a cornerstone of pleasure, culture and community (www.slowfoodusa.com, From Plate to Planet, accessed March 13, 2013).

The same grammar can be found on the sites of local convivia, the community

groups that make up the structure of the movement. Here it is in Austin on the website of Slow Food Austin.

> Who we are:
> **Culture**We celebrate the pleasure of the table.We want to make the world a little slower, living an unhurried life beginning at the table.We cultivate the enjoyment and quality of life.We honor our culture and tradition. Behind every dish there are choices made in the fields.
>
> **Knowledge**We support awareness and education.We are people who exchange knowledge and experience.We create links between pleasure and food with awareness and responsibility.
>
> **Community**We cherish the diverse food communities and traditions of Austin and Central Texas.We focus on the relationships between producers, cooks and all who eat.

Once again, even though the headline *Who We Are* at the top of this post appears to speak of an identity, it is an enacted identity constructed of a paradigm of actions: cherish food communities, focus on relationships, celebrate pleasure and tradition, support education and many others. Those actions are networked through the main Slow Food organizations in Italy, the US and other countries, connecting any locality with other localities around the world through the convivia that provide the local entry points to this grassroots discourse.

The eat local movement and its permutations provide a great corpus of texts for assessing the paradigm of action underlying globalism from below. For analytical purposes, it is worth ensuring that it can be found in other corners of the global food discourse. On the World Bank food crisis site, cogent suggestions for action abound.

Consider this list of suggestions from Nigeria for alleviating global hunger and the malfunctions of agricultural development.

> First a critical turn around in the storage system for the available excess is needed – cheap, simple and safe for consumption [storage systems] should be made available. So we all can't be farmers, realistic and sustainable funding should be made available for farmers or interested parties. Government should be prompted, pushed, assisted in any necessary instance to develop basic infrastructure like [providing] good roads and energy to aid development. Finally sustainable farming should be encouraged…the back of the house is a healthy way to ensure organic feeding and at the same time creating a healthy hobby, you can't beat the joy of knowing you eased the pain of the world. Omolere – Nigeria (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions).

This Nigerian has suggestions for action for several different players in the social system. The exhortations for funding and storage systems are no doubt intended for institutions. However, the rest of the posting is geared toward individuals and the acts they should undertake on an ongoing basis. While governments must carry out certain functions, the onus is on individuals to *prompt, push and assist* governments in doing so. Lastly, the post points directly to some equipment for living in terms of planting a garden and eating from one's own labor rather than purchasing commodities from global markets.

Elsewhere, in the World Bank food site's discussion, an Indian echoed the paradigm of action that resists producing for and consuming from the global market: "We need to return to agriculture and farming based everyday life. People need to use technology to innovate in farming techniques and other related areas" (Hasuviti – India;

live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions). There is an element of de Certeau's view of the library of practices to draw on in this post. The poster's call to action is to return to a paradigm of action that is now suppressed. Interestingly, the reference to technology indicates that this is not a return to the pre-modern *per se*, rather a return to a way of life that provided action – now aided with the technology available in the contemporary world. It channels the idea that there is not a rejection of the conditions of the moment, rather the social order imposed on everyone from neoliberal globalism from above.

The equipment for living/paradigm of action critique can be found in the passages critiqued in the next section as well. To conclude, this section argued that globalism from below is built out of a strong thread of act-based grammar and that this grammar produces and disseminates equipment for living. This attitude toward action, propelled in the face of the orthodoxy of the neoliberal umbrella is a building block of agency as a capacity to affect the world.

**Transcendence Downward: A Casuistry of Rights Toward a Theory of Agency**

Perhaps it is not surprising that globalism from below features transcendence downward, a movement of isolated phenomena – in this case *agency* – downward in a hierarchy, as a counter to the upward variety outlined in the previous chapter's examination of neoliberal globalism from above. Indeed, the current chapter argues that grassroots globalism from below embraces transcendence downward. Yet, it is more complicated than a reflexive case of reversing a move in a powerful discourse. I argue that transcendence downward in grassroots globalism from below is a discursive

reconfiguring of the technologies and structures underlying globalism from above. Grassroots globalism from below rejects neoliberalism and its efforts to impose agricultural development standards, capitalist free-market orthodoxy and its claim of meta-world utopia. However, globalism from below does *not* disavow the utility or promise of a networked world that can make technology, expertise, capital and other resources available to solve problems in local environments. The distinction between the two views of the social order involves who is in control of those resources, who is in charge on the ground, who chooses what problem to solve and who is the ultimate beneficiary (i.e. local farmers and citizens or multi-national corporations). In globalism from below, the resources still have value and can still be conceptually and physically located outside a local environment; but power over those resources shifts from neoliberal institutions to local protagonists attempting to solve problems defined by local people.

Neoliberal globalism from above puts institutions such as the World Bank in the position of dictating terms to those in local milieus (see Toussaint 2006 or Roberts 2008 for more detailed explorations of the ways such things happened). Posters to the World Bank-hosted conversation on the food crisis argue for a reformation of that power relationship. The following poster suggests a negotiation can be had.

> The inherent problem from what I see is the way we've structured and imposed our … markets. Thus MY QUESTION IS: Why doesn't the World Bank further provide support for those people not through one off loans, payments but a rather more long term perspective that engenders a different kind of value (different from price) where agricultural and land knowledge between developed and developing countries could be shared. For example: Local

> traditions could be combined with advanced technology to better farm the land. Oday Kamal – Australia (live.worldbank.org/open-forum-food-crisis/solutions, emphasis in original)

The post begins by negating the utopian meta-world, but moves past that indictment quickly. In this construction, the advanced technology would still originate from outside the local environment. The local individual would call on this resource to grow more sweet potatoes and greens in Africa for the purpose of feeding Africans. This is a forward-looking prescription for a new relationship between above and below where the knowledge and history in a locality is revalued and simply augmented by outside resources to raise the effectiveness of both. Ending the dictated reality from above and revaluing what is local is a recurring theme. The tools of modernity could be called upon by local individuals to solve problems in their lives rather than have the World Bank or some other entity come and tell them what to do as a condition of receiving help from the meta-world. This poster on the World Bank food site makes this claim:

> We need to provide fishing hooks/nets instead of fish so that hungry people could able to catch plenty of fishes themselves to feed for longer period. Additionally, we need to build their capacity in using those hooks/nets, and guide/suggest [to] them where fishes are available. Cumulative efforts from the duty bearers government, international and national development agencies, donors, civil societies, and concerned authorities is needed to fight and address the hunger all over the world. Pratap Rai – Nepal

This Nepali has a call to action primarily for those promoting globalism from above, but the "we" here is for collective action from a range of actors from governments to donors to civil society itself. I use this particular post here because it invokes a

common metaphor in the language of individual agency: Giving people fish versus teaching them how to fish.

This is a reformation of the amorphous way globalization has worked by being everywhere yet emanating from nowhere all at once. The network of capabilities might still extend beyond the locality, but at least the individual on the ground can call upon it, thus creating actors where there were previously passive recipients. The posts recognize the hierarchy of above/below, local/global. The key difference with the way the institutional rhetoric in Chapter 4 described the hierarchy is that these posts rhetorically pull agency back into the local environment.

The previous chapter argued that agency – or a lack thereof – is a key component of the transcendent upward movement in globalism from above. Agency leaves local scenes and individuals and infuses into global institutions and free markets as if a magnet were pulling it skyward. This chapter argues that a defining characteristic of globalism from below is the struggle to recover a discourse of agency that can circulate among locally situated individuals. This rhetorical effort is an illustration of the Cloud & Gunn (2010) argument that agency is produced rhetorically in situational struggles rather than presupposed as an imminent force. Said differently, to believe one can affect the world and take control of one's own life requires a language to imagine it and talk about it that fits the current circumstances of the world.

Here, I argue that the struggle for agency is producing an emergent theory of rights disseminated through a casuistic rhetoric that stretches the construct of rights from the democratic nation-state organization of the world into a more globalized era. Burke

argued that casuistry was a key rhetorical strategy in his discursive theory of history (Burke 1937 p. 134). Frames stretch until they reach their Malthusian limits and shards of past ears become elaborated into larger frames at points of transition. Globalism from below is well into this elaboration. In essence, rights talk is a shard from the nation-state era of social era that is being stretched into a theory of global agency. It is certainly not fully developed yet; however, this theory is identifiable and it is articulated against neoliberal globalism, often explicitly as a different way of organizing the world and preserving the local capacity to affect the world.

To set context for this examination, it is worth noting Burke's observation of past instances of similar types of attitudes of rejection. Burke argued that 19th century anarchism appears dangerous to our ears today and to many ears in the later 19th century, but only after a frame of conformity to schedules was well established.

> Thus in the 19th century, our grammar permitted considerable vocalizing on the subject of 'anarchism.' One would not understand the statements in their full cultural bearing if one did not know that they coexisted with extreme regularity in the co-operative organization of railroad schedules. Printing, mails, education, bookstores – an enormous amount of such equipment had to be 'taken for granted' by the speaker. And the horror of a non-anarchist, when the anarchist spoke, arose from the fact that the speaker made other allowances than the auditor. The anarchist generally used the word to designate an emphasis made atop this organization; the auditor resisted because, for him, the word designated organization per se, and he knew that you can't get a world without organization (Burke 1937 p. 113).

The passage teases out a confusion of a past era that might apply to globalism from below. Essentially, Burke argued that the word *anarchism* lives in historical infamy

from that era because of a misinterpretation. To those heavily invested in the times and unable or unwilling to see the discourse of conformity produced by conditions, *anarchism* sounded like dangerous nonsense and a call to destroy social organization. Rather, Burke argued that anarchism accepted the coordinated scheduling of the era and attempted to provide discursive alternatives atop that foundation. Likewise, in what follows I will argue that in rejecting the movement of agency upward globalism from below does not reject the condition of a globalizing world and interdependent society. Rather, it works to construct an alternative to the neoliberal globalism from above that is still built atop globalizing conditions. Agency is a key ingredient in that recipe.

The second idea to point out from the Burke passage is that alternatives gather steam only after an acceptance frame enters a period of maturity. Things that had been contentious melt into the social foundations of the era as norms develop out of settlements of contentious items. The anarchist cannot be identified as a threat until much is *taken for granted* and has simply disappeared into the environment taken as the norm. This indicates a somewhat mature state of the acceptance frame.

To discuss agency requires tradable symbols and discursive units and their underlying constructs. One of the food-based threads of globalism from below involves a repost to *food security* as it was discussed in the previous chapter. Food sovereignty is a metonymy of a theory of rights, a discursive unit that reduces that theory into a symbol amenable to circulation. Slow Food USA offers a clear message that food is an intersection of discourse and rights.

> Our Vision: Food is a common language and a universal right. Slow Food USA envisions a world in which all people can eat food that is good for them, good for the people who grow it and good for the planet (Slow Food USA).

Slow Food USA recognizes food as a "common language" and a "universal right" in this text from movement's site. Food as a universal right is at the heart of a widely distributed network dedicated to food sovereignty. The trope appears to extend from 1996 and Via Campesina, a loosely organized movement supporting peasants, small landholders and subsistence farmers. "The main goal of the movement is to realize food sovereignty and stop the destructive neoliberal process. It is based on the conviction that small farmers, including peasant fisher-folk, pastoralists and indigenous people, who make up almost half the world's people, are capable of producing food for their communities and feeding the world in a sustainable and healthy way (www.viacampesina.org, "The International Peasant's Voice," accessed March 15, 2013)." Here, food sovereignty is wielded in direct opposition to neoliberalism and its efforts to eclipse traditional lifestyles and redirect land to other purposes. From this beginning, food sovereignty is now the metonymical glue that holds together a broad coalition of groups struggling for agency under the neoliberal umbrella. Those groups range from hunger activists to indigenous people's movements. Consider this statement of intent from an evolving organization called the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty.

> The People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty is a growing *network* of various grassroots groups of small food producers particularly of peasant-farmer organizations and their support NGOs, working

towards a People's Convention on Food Sovereignty. The People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty seeks:

1. To develop and promote the People's Food Sovereignty as the *alternative platform against neoliberal globalization* on food and agriculture policies.

2. To develop and popularise [sic] the proposals of the People's Convention on Food Sovereignty as a way to…*disseminate* the concept of food sovereignty, as a guiding principle in food and agriculture, and as a unifying call for mass movements across the globe.

3. To coordinate regional and global activities on Food Sovereignty including mobilization [sic], research and policy advocacy.

4. To exchange information, skills and experiences in achieving Food Sovereignty *in the local, national and regional levels*.

5. To promote the acceptance of a globally binding International Convention on Food Sovereignty at the *national and international level* (www.foodsov.org, About Us, accessed March 17, 2013, emphasis added).

This particular group has roots in Asia, but other groups extend from South America and Africa and there are groups in Europe as well. In the above passage, the negative register and opposition to neoliberalism is the introduction to the concept of food sovereignty. As developed earlier in the chapter, this passage also channels the act-based grammar. The other terms I highlighted signal the network interconnections of these groups as they come together around the metonymy with the intention of *disseminating* it further. Toward the end of the passage, the global intentions of the network are made clear as food sovereignty is not just about choices made locally but

must circle the globe providing choices about how to live. Food sovereignty is further positioned as a reaction to a trope of globalism from above: food security.

> Food sovereignty goes beyond the concept of *food security*, which has been stripped of real meaning. Food security means that every child, woman, and man must have the certainty of having enough to eat each day; but the concept says nothing about where that food comes from or how it is produced. Thus Washington is able to argue that importing cheap food from the US is a better way for poor countries to achieve food security than producing it themselves. But massive imports of cheap, subsidized food undercut local farmers, driving them off their land. They swell the ranks of the hungry, and their food security is placed in the hands of the cash economy just as they migrate to urban slums where they cannot find living wage jobs. To achieve *genuine* food security, people in rural areas must have access to productive land and receive prices for their crops that allow them to make a decent living (www.foodfirst.org, Rosset "Food sovereignty: global rallying cry for farmer movements," Backgrounder Fall 2003, emphasis in original).

As the author argues here, through the food sovereignty metonymy globalism from below rejects food security as an empty trope of globalism from above. It is precisely the market-based nature of food security at issue here; access to food through cash earned from the sale of commodities is rejected as being both passive and ultimately lacking in true security since one is dependent on the functioning of markets beyond the locality. Food sovereignty is an intentionally constructed trope, a discursive reduction of globalism from below into a unit that can circulate. Food sovereignty communicates the implementation of equipment for living – doing things for yourself – in the language of rights.

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and

> sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers and users. Food sovereignty prioritises [sic] local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal - fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability. Food sovereignty promotes transparent trade that guarantees just incomes to all peoples as well as the rights of consumers to control their food and nutrition. It ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those of us who produce food. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and inequality between men and women, peoples, racial groups, social and economic classes and generations (From www.nyeleni.org, "Declaration of Nyeleni" accessed February 20, 2013).

The term *food sovereignty* and the word *right* or forms thereof both appear four times in this passage from one of the foundational food sovereignty documents from Africa. Several rights are articulated here so that – as a trope – food sovereignty stands in for a regime of rights: the right to grow what you want, the right to feed yourself first rather than sell commodities into global markets in exchange for cash to buy food, and the right to manage land as you see fit in a locality. This effort to construct agency involves a theory of rights this network is undertaking to have recognized – versus a more abstract view of an end state (a scenic grammar marker) contained in *food security*.

> Unlike food security, which is a set of goals for food and nutrition policies, the Food Sovereignty framework is formulated as an alternative policy proposition to liberalized industrial agriculture

> and it amalgamates elements from different policy areas into one framework.
>
> It covers issues which are already recognized in international law – e.g. the Right to Food – but also includes other aspects using rights-based language, which are so far not part of international law, such as 'the right to Food Sovereignty' or the 'right to produce'. The rights-based language is used to support the political demands by showing that these objectives have to be implemented to fulfil rights that are considered as basic by the affected communities. The framework covers the rights of individuals and the rights of all people at the same time. Even though both approaches are possible, more precision is needed in the use of the rights-based language. The political expansion of the rights-based language contains the risks for those rights, which are already legally binding, being seen more as political demands (Windfuhr & Jonsen 2005 p. 24).

The rhetorical nature of the project at hand arises from this passage as well as the attitude toward history promoted. *Food security* and *food sovereignty* are not in the same category. The former is a goal based on the creation of a free market environment – or a meta-world in the lexicon of the present project. The latter is a theory of rights and this theory is broken down in broad terms here. Some of the rights are already codified to some extent. Yet, some aspects of the theory of rights are political demands based on the conditions of the new era and those demands are intentionally phrased with *rights-based language*. A similar construction of the theory of rights can be found in other texts from elsewhere in the food sovereignty movement.

> Throughout the world, civil society, indigenous peoples and new social movements, - rather than academics or professional policy think tanks -, are the prime movers behind a newly emerging food sovereignty policy framework. At its heart, this alternative policy framework for food and agriculture aims to guarantee and protect

> people's space, ability and right to define their *own* models of production, food distribution and consumption patterns. This notion of "food sovereignty" is perhaps best understood as a *transformative process* that seeks to recreate the democratic realm and regenerate a diversity of autonomous food systems based on equity, social justice and ecological sustainability (Pimbert 2008 p. 3, emphasis in original).

The above passage and the one before it both demonstrate the casuistic rhetorical strategy at work in establishing agency in globalism from below. The effort here is to *extend* rights, to *extend* rights-based language to make new demands under new conditions, to *recreate* a democratic space. If the trope of food security is rightly critiqued as a goal with no real substance to it, the theory of rights underlying food sovereignty is dependent on making an argument that precepts of the democratic nation-state structure of the world can be stretched into a global space. *Food sovereignty* reduces the casuistry of rights to a discursive unit that can be traded along networks of globalism from below.

**Conclusion**

If the previous chapter found that neoliberal globalism from above is a fully elaborated acceptance frame, this chapter argued that globalism from below is gathering discursive steam as a rejection frame. It has produced some symbolic units such as food sovereignty that harken back to de Tocqueville's dogma of personal sovereignty mentioned in Chapter 1 by which individuals in the American nation-state constructed themselves as free and powerful under a democratic nation-state regime. The interplay of the two globalisms and their trajectories opens new questions that I will ponder in the

concluding chapter. Through several sections of textual analysis, the chapter argued several points:

- The two frames overlap in constructing a world that has two fundamental scenes: the local environment of individuals on the ground, and the institutional world over and above any one locale.
- Grassroots globalism from below specifically negates the utopian meta-world constructed in globalism from above, the world of benevolent institutions and free markets. The institutional world above is a source of corruption, destructive power dynamics and problematics even if it also offers positive tools such as capital, technology and expertise.
- One of grassroots globalism from below's strengths as a frame of social organization is in its ability to offer equipment for living – the *oughts and ought-nots* of daily life. While neoliberal globalism from above contains an abstract construct of equipment for living – rely on markets – globalism from below offers a rich menu of items that range from daily life tactics such as cooking to larger issues of consumerism and sustainability. Equipment for living is not only rich in globalism from below, it demonstrates some momentum through the proliferation of farmer's markets and community-supported agriculture's spread as well as media forms – from food network to DIY blogs – that support it. It is a strong indicator that grassroots globalism from below has matured beyond simple rejection of neoliberalism and is vying to articulate an alternative form of

global social order through its need for a "do this" imperative in its discourse.

- Lastly, I argued that a reconstruction of agency lay at the heart of grassroots globalism from below, feeding on and driving downward transcendence and the proliferation of equipment for living. The construction of a rights-based discourse of agency is a further negation of globalism from above's utopian meta-world that constructs individuals as passive objects.

I have now surveyed both globalism from above and below. As Burke discovered almost a century ago, it is difficult to predict when a frame reaches its Malthusian limits. Hindsight, as with so many things, offers greater clarity. However, it is not a stretch at this point to claim that a battle over the *next* discursive frame of history is brewing, one that is more appropriate to the conditions of the world today, rather than the late 20th century world that Harvey outlined at neoliberalism's launch. That battle is being waged over the direction of transcendence in a globalized world, the nature of the equipment for living and the construction of agency. These discursive contours raise certain questions for further thought and research, questions I will ponder in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

## Chapter 6 *Attitudes Toward the Present: 'Rumblings from Below'*

I began on page one of this dissertation painting the word picture of a defiant Jose Bove with a tractor and a closed McDonald's. Like his first visit to the restaurant – when he drove the tractor into the building – he spoke of cheese and culture. Yet, as the Associated Press related, Bove's real target was "unchecked globalization" (Keaten 2001). Even that statement, however, was not so precise as it might have been. One of the tasks I set in the first two chapters of this dissertation was to separate terms such as *globalization*, an ongoing process of interconnections across the planet, from *globalism*, a discourse of organizing people into a globe-spanning social order. Bove's real target was not the process so much as neoliberal globalism, an ideological discourse that seeks to organize all territories and people into markets of production workers and consumers. Neoliberal globalism has positioned itself as the common sense view of how an interconnected world operates. There is no alternative, as Margaret Thatcher claimed and many others have echoed.

Lady Thatcher and those sincerely quoting her were wrong. Even Jose Bove, no friend of Lady Thatcher's, is open to a form of bottom-up grassroots globalism. He is associated with a loosely organized movement that goes by the term *alter-globalization* (what I find to be an imprecise term using the more popular, more confusing lexicon; *alter-globalism* would be a more apt moniker). Alter-globalization is a loose movement that has progressed in fits and starts toward "building new ways of social change in the global age" (Pleyers 2013 p. 260). The movement works toward realizing the potential benefits of a globally connected world by starting "from below and transforming one's

own practices" (Pleyers 2013 p. 260). If such a future of grassroots globalism and the society it would envision are possible, a great many things must fall into place. This project was conceived as an effort to find some of the discursive elements of that grassroots globalism.

A grassroots globalism would be an organized discourse that can provide the tools to talk about the world in a way that is radically different from neoliberal globalism. Such a discourse is especially important because it will not be easy to reconfigure a world that has spent some 40 years implementing neoliberalism and the last two decades talking about a lack of alternatives – the combination creating what this dissertation has termed a neoliberal umbrella, a metaphor indicating a covering that casts anything underneath into its shadow. One necessary rhetorical tool for a grassroots globalism is a construction of agency, a claim that all these people struggling in the grassroots of a connected world have the capacity to affect that world. This dissertation accepted at the outset that the neoliberal umbrella exists and set the goal of spying agency in the making.

This dissertation is largely a work of rhetorical criticism using the methods and ideas of Kenneth Burke. One of my earliest introductions to critical practice involved a key statement from *Modern Rhetorical Criticism* by Roderick P. Hart (1997). The esteemed rhetorician wrote that the critic's job entailed developing a body of textual evidence from which one could make an "imaginative leap" (Hart 1997 p. 33) from texts to ideas. After assessing a wide variety of texts involving food talk – from the World Bank and the United Nations to social movements and individuals from Kenya to the United Kingdom, it is time for that leap.

Burke's discursive theory of history provided a framework for assessing the rhetorical underpinnings of neoliberal globalism from above and the tools for probing for a counter-discourse, a grassroots globalism that constructs an interconnected world operating from the bottom-up rather than the top-down. Burke's acceptance and rejection frames provided the framework to analyze the underlying motivations of neoliberal texts and a motley crew of texts that thread from farmer's markets to social movements at a grassroots level of the global economy, many nodes connected by the Internet.

At the highest level, my finding is that the struggle over the construction of agency is key to the direction of society's organization at a global scope. Neoliberal globalism contends that agency flows upward through a transcendent hierarchy, from local environments outside the market system into global markets and the institutions that tend those markets. This view of the social order has the advantage of operating as an acceptance frame under Burke's discursive theory of history. It dominates and has operationalized itself as common sense for elites and secondarily for producers and consumers.

Yet, the next steps in the march of discursive history might be more complicated than a straightforward extension of neoliberalism. A grassroots globalism, globalism from below, is in the making. This version of globalism operates as a rejection frame in Burke's theory of discursive history. It recognizes that it operates in the shadow of a neoliberal orthodoxy. Yet, this grassroots globalism is producing a theory of agency – still in its infancy – built around a casuistic theory of rights, an attempt to extend a key

element of the nation-state narrative of citizenship. The trading of rhetorical tokens such as *food sovereignty* is key to the development of this theory of agency.

The battle is engaged over the equipment for living in a globalized world. The equipment for living proffered within globalism from above is that individuals should simply rely on selling commodities into the market system and purchasing their commodity needs from markets and avoid doing things for themselves. By contrast, grassroots globalism proffers a rich tapestry of acts that can summon an interconnected world where agency can remain local while still drawing on a world's worth of resources. By no means do I claim that such a reality exists today. However, it is difficult to make such a world a reality without the tools to talk about such a potential world. In short, this project has traced the building blocks of a new way to talk about a globalized world where individuals can construct their own sense of affecting it.

**Chapter Review**

In Chapter 1, I argued that globalized conditions have eroded the discourse of citizenship that organized individuals into the world of democratic nation-states. While that language still circulates, neoliberal globalism has reduced its link to agency as nation-states become administrators of zones of the global markets and the presumed powers of the citizen – such as the vote – cannot affect policies circumscribed by markets. Chapter 1 problematized globalism from above and its disconnect from the everyday language of agency embedded in the discourse of democratic nation-state citizenship.

Chapter 2 situated this dissertation at the intersection of the scholarly literatures of globalization and Rhetoric. Chapter 2 traced neoliberal ideology's roots and its emergence as a dominant discourse of global social order in the post-Cold War world and its influence even on theories of global society that purport to be different from neoliberalism. The chapter developed the claim that the framing paradigm articulated in Burke's *Attitudes Toward History* (1937) is not just a backward-looking tool; that it can be used to assess the current moment of globalism discourse, offering a way to assess the strengths and weaknesses of neoliberal globalism and probe for alternatives to its hegemony.

Chapter 3 developed a critical method around Burke's theory of discursive history contained in *Attitudes Toward History* (Burke 1937). That method was built around identifying transcendence and equipment for living and their interplay. The chapter argued that a key step in assessing discourse at a global scale is to select texts that impinge on a given exigency shared around the globe that manifests itself in macro and micro ways. In this project, food talk provides those texts, drawing on eat-local discourses, agri-business and food activism.

Chapter 4 analyzed neoliberal globalism from above and its fitness as an acceptance frame. The chapter argued that globalism from above used a scenic grammar to establish a bifurcated world composed of a dysfunctional local world outside the market system, a place of poverty and backward thinking; that squalor contrasted with a meta-world of free markets and globalized institutions. That organization of the social world created an upward transcendence for agency, removing it from individuals and

investing it in the meta-world. I argued neoliberal globalism from above supplied a fundamental equipment for living – relying on markets versus doing things for yourself – a rhetorical move that has the benefit of simplicity and mass applicability. Yet, the chapter also posed the question of whether this singular construct of equipment for living might be vulnerable to a more specific approach to establishing a paradigm of intentional action and a larger corpus of equipment for living. Chapter 4 set the context for Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 analyzed grassroots globalism from below and its fitness as a rejection frame as well as its trajectory vis-à-vis neoliberalism and the march of discursive history. I argued that globalism from below operates as a rejection frame with key characteristics. Consistent with Burke's theory of the rejection frame, grassroots globalism from below overlaps with neoliberal globalism from above in bifurcating the world into two scenes. However, globalism from below negates the authority of the meta-world and its governing institutions as an idealized space. Rather, a negative register cutting across various texts constructs the neoliberal world from above as corrupt and the source of many issues vexing localities and global society. Contrasting with neoliberal globalism from above, grassroots globalism from below reverses the direction of the transcendent function, attempting to root the control of this bifurcated world into local environments that can then draw on technology, capital and expertise from above to solve local problems while preserving local environments, identities and culture. Finally, the chapter argued that globalism from below's greatest strengths are the menu of equipment for

living through intentional acts that it promotes and the reconstruction of agency that entails.

**Addressing Research Questions**

I began with two overarching questions: What are the rhetorical strategies to:

- Form individual agency in a world being organized by neoliberal globalism from above?
- Create the basis of a globalism from below?

At the beginning of the project, I thought it likely that the answers to these questions would be more directional than concrete – that I would catch an emergent construct or pull on a rhetorical thread rather than discover a fully formed discourse. The answers I found are more fully formed than the descriptor *directional* would imply, though *concrete* would be an exaggeration. Globalism from below has evolved enough that it is not just rejecting neoliberalism, but contesting its hold on the social organization of the world and circulating consistent discursive elements through the global Internet. In coming back to directly address these initial research questions, I should preface the answers with the comment that they raise some further questions worth pursuing.

*What are the rhetorical strategies to form agency under a neoliberal umbrella?* Agency is a key battleground if a grassroots globalism from below is sustainable. To appreciate the stakes, one must first appreciate that neoliberal globalism constructs agency moving out of local environments and localized individuals in an upward movement. Neoliberal globalism imbues agency in free markets on a global basis and the

global institutions that administer and operate those markets. In the neoliberal construction of the social order, individuals are reduced to mere motion rather than action within those markets – or poverty and destitution if they are outside those markets.

Grassroots globalism from below has a big challenge to develop a construction of agency that can hope to balance that powerful upward transcendence. To do so, grassroots globalism from below employs casuistry as a rhetorical strategy to reconstruct agency for individuals in local environments. This discourse stretches the construct of rights from nation-state discourse into a more globalized frame as Chapter 5 described. That rights would form the basis of a rejection frame is consistent with Burke's idea that shards of disintegrated frames continue to circulate and select shards can be elaborated into discourses. In this case, rights talk provides rhetorical resources for recovering the capacity to affect the world. In this case, though, it is not the overtly political right of voting for instance, that is at issue. It is a more fundamental view of rights, more akin to human rights discourse. That this project has isolated *rights* as playing a significant role in the reconstruction of agency potentially generates issues worthy of further study.

For instance, as Chapter 1 argued, rights in the liberal democratic tradition are founded in a relationship between an individual and some entity – historically a state. The theory of rights embedded in grassroots globalism from below faces a sustainability challenge if a similar relationship is required. Some of the texts under study here contain calls for nation-states or the United Nations to expand their footprints to play this role of guaranteeing rights on a global playing field. I suspect this theory of rights isolated here

is a step in the process of elaborating a grassroots globalism rather than its end point. I will develop those thoughts more fully in a moment.

*What are the rhetorical strategies to create the basis of a globalism from below?* The simplest answer to this question is that globalism from below tailors the aspects of a rejection frame as outlined in Chapter 3 and elaborated in Chapter 5. Specifically, those strategies are:

- A negation of the valorous meta-world of markets and institutions and the authority symbols such as the World Bank and multi-national corporations created by neoliberal globalism;
- A reversal of the transcendent function in neoliberal globalism. That neoliberal transcendent function pulls agency from localities and individuals into free markets and global institutions; in contrast, grassroots globalism locates agency in individuals in their localities and places them in control of their own lives and ideally in control of resources such as technology and capital available via networks;
- The production of metonymies such as food sovereignty and potentially other discursive units that can be traded via the Internet across localities to build a new discourse of globalism from below. These tropes make it easier for the theory of rights to circulate. No doubt other tropes derived from globalism from below circulate and this project provides the basis for discovering them.

Agency is reappearing in the discourse of globalism – specifically in a grassroots globalism from below – after decades of erosion. This rebirth of agency is elaborated into a rich array of equipment for living such as eating local food, planting gardens, canning vegetables and other ways of taking action. I make no claim that globalism from below as discussed here enjoys the same power dynamics as neoliberalism. The World Bank, the IMF and multi-national corporations such as Monsanto still have access to capital and can dictate many terms of any engagement. Likewise, no matter how valorous, subsistence farmers are still struggling to live and the backyard gardener turned *eat-local* activist must admit that organic kale makes a better salad than it does a weapon of conflict. All of those points must be stipulated to appreciate what this dissertation has produced in examining the discursive dimensions of this struggle. To push my findings further, it is possible that something larger is still in the making.

**Toward a Rhetoric of Global Personal Sovereignty**

The finding that grassroots globalism contains a theory of rights to drive agency requires that I revisit a claim made in Chapters 1 and 2. At the outset of this dissertation, I argued that ideas such as cosmopolitan citizenship as a means of conceiving agency under the neoliberal umbrella suffered from a flaw in that there is no structural entity that guarantees those rights as in the nation-state organization of the world. My reasoning for that claim was that citizenship discourse was a product of the nation-state organization of the world. In that construction, the nation-state *guaranteed* the rights of the citizen. In effect, the liberal democratic nation-state created citizens by positioning itself as the guarantor of those rights within territorial boundaries. Adding "cosmopolitan" as a

descriptor decouples the citizen from the territory of the nation-state. Yet, doing so further weakens the agency that comes with being a citizen with no structure to replace it.

Likewise, picking up from the second research question, it does not seem at face value that a theory of rights alone is sufficient to supply a counterweight to neoliberal globalism from above. In a globalized world that transcends the nation-state, no entity is charged with guaranteeing those rights from Hong Kong to Mexico City to Paris to Lagos and any other place on the planet. Borrowing the language of citizenship to promote the concept of cosmopolitan citizenship, therefore, strikes me as borrowing the mythology of citizenship discourse without the structures and promises instantiated by that discourse. Claiming the status of cosmopolitan citizen might provide some personal description and identity building as someone who sees beyond borders, but it has structural problems in providing a similar level of agency.

Yet, Chapter 5 demonstrated that the rhetorical strategy developing a claim of agency within grassroots globalism is a casuistry of rights borrowing from citizenship discourse. To be a true rhetorical source of agency – rather than a descriptor – this appropriation of rights talk requires some theorizing to understand. In outlining a global social order, neoliberal globalism has no vested interest in guaranteeing these rights. Indeed, neoliberal globalism is actively hostile to any guarantees that are not secured by markets and economic competition. Under that umbrella, what balance could possibly be found in this rights talk?

In what follows, I propose that this theory of rights in grassroots globalism is a step toward *a rhetoric of global personal sovereignty (R-GPS)*, a construction of

individual autonomy and agency beyond borders. The idea of R-GPS is directional at the moment and calls for much thought on my part and by others as well as discursive development among the grassroots. In a rough form, R-GPS is a struggle to define agency across localities linked by the Internet that share the common material circumstance of existing under a neoliberal umbrella. The point of departure is the common struggle with neoliberal globalism and the forces of capital underscored by Cloud & Gunn (2010) when they wrote: "Individuals do not exist in isolation, but bear the traces of other individuals, institutions, collective social relations, and histories in such a way that to speak of 'agency' as something any one person possess [sic] ignores the interactive dynamic of material and social reality" (Cloud & Gunn 2010 p. 73). In the struggle with neoliberal globalism, R-GPS would be a means for developing a collective sense of agency that anyone can tap into in his or her local environment.

A huge caveat exists for the trajectory of R-GPS as a discourse and as a theory of globalism. With no entity guaranteeing rights, individuals are developing a claim of inherent rights that come not with citizenship but with humanity. Autonomy is secured not by any one entity or even by a pastiche of entities but by the proliferation of this rhetoric among the grassroots everywhere, persuading them of the inherent capacities and entitlements of the human qua human. The long-term success is not guaranteed.

Yet, the notion of *food sovereignty* in Chapter 5 provides a marker pointing in that direction. Why does the rhetorical unit *food sovereignty* exist? Said differently, if one were going to claim a capacity for agency and personal sovereignty in a new social order

why make *food* the basis of that claim rather than something more overtly political such as the *vote*?

The answer might be that rebuilding agency without a guaranteeing entity requires a new baseline from which to build. When all other capacities of agency are taken by the hegemon, what choices does one still control? One can still control what one eats or the act of eating itself.[23] The hunger strike has been used as a form of resistance against hegemons from South Africa to Guantanamo Bay. It is based on the claim that certain fundamental capacities cannot be taken away no matter how powerful and rapacious an oppressor. In the case of food sovereignty, that capacity for ingesting sustenance (or not) is extended incrementally to where you shop for food, how you grow it yourself and your ability to know its provenance.

R-GPS also has some theoretical connections to the eat local movement via de Tocqueville. In the early 19th century, the French liberal thinker lionized the American discourse of the sovereignty of the people. "In America, the principle of the sovereignty of the people is not hidden or sterile as in certain nations; it is recognized by *mores*, proclaimed by the laws, it spreads with freedom and reaches its final consequences without obstacle" (de Tocqueville 2000 p. 53, emphasis added). By *mores*, de Tocqueville referred to social rules built into the organization of society, what Burke later called *equipment for living*.

[23] I recognize that in the case of Guantanamo Bay, even the hunger strike has been taken away through forced feeding.

These mores extended from what was then *the local*, by de Tocqueville's estimation. He found this idea of personal sovereignty in the New England town hall meetings. He painted a picture of personal sovereignty being adopted by larger and larger political units ending as the representative form of government in the national constitution (de Tocqueville 2000 p. 56). The analogy in contemporary times is that R-GPS necessarily starts in a local environment; the eat local movement is the equivalent of a New England town hall.[24]

De Tocqueville's model involved successively larger political units adopting the sovereignty of the people discourse over time. According to Wolin (2001), the public nature of the discourse mediated between the individual and the collective; the danger of atomization was reduced by the circulation of these mores among people in the same general milieu (Wolin 2001 pp. 215-217). The 21st century medium negotiating between the "personal" in *personal sovereignty* and the collective need of the grassroots at large is the Internet's contemporary ability to collapse time and space. The Internet allows symbols and discursive units such as *food sovereignty* to be traded with little or no friction and for localities to be discursively linked across time and space. This aids the

[24] In fact, as I write, Vermont is under assault by the global food industry for its effort to force the labeling of genetically modified organisms in food sold within the state (Dana Ford and Lorenzo Ferrigno, CNN; http://www.cnn.com/2014/05/08/health/vermont-gmo-labeling/).

construction of a grassroots globalism to develop a circulating rhetoric – what I am calling here R-GPS – as a counterpoint to neoliberal globalism from above.

Food offers itself as a foundational component of R-GPS because of its nature as a biological necessity and its role in local cultures. Is food sovereignty enough for a fully-fledged discourse of grassroots globalism? Most likely it requires more development into a more rounded discourse. One area of further scholarly study for R-GPS as a theory is the identification of new components, new capacities that are constructed as inherent in the nature of being human and therefore do not need a guaranteeing entity to ensure. Along these lines, I am interested in watching the growth of the *right to be forgotten* promulgated by the European Court of Justice in a case involving links provided by a Google search (Streitfeld 2014). Google is developing a means for individuals to order the removal of links to personal information they consider old, irrelevant, defamatory or untrue. The right to be forgotten is a privacy right rooted in French law and culture (Rosen 2012). Essentially, the idea is that no one should be hostage to his or her past if he or she has moved beyond it; the concept is at the heart of Victor Hugo's book *Les Miserables* and its treatments in theater and cinema. In the book, the character of Jean Valjean starts life as a prisoner that escapes and soon steals from a priest who befriends him. After he is caught and returned to the priest, the priest not only claims Valjean's innocence but offers him even more items from the church. The episode changes Valjean's heart and he uses this meager wealth to build a business under a new name and attempts to help people along the way, raising a prostitute's daughter as his own as one of the central movements in the narrative. Yet, despite these

many changes in Valjean's life, Javert, a constable who pursues him relentlessly, constantly shadows Valjean. Javert seeks to bring Valjean to justice for his past crimes.

The struggle between Valjean and Javert is Valjean's own struggle to leave his past behind, a struggle that is now finding legs in the Internet era via this EU determination. The right to be forgotten is a potential candidate for incorporation into R-GPS. The ruling comes from a supra-national legal body. It is aimed at civilizing the workings of a global medium that knows no bounds and it holds multi-national corporations – Google most prominently – responsible for respecting this right inherent in the audience members of those corporations. Once again, this is not an overt political capacity in the same way that voting creates individual power – or at least a claim to it – in the nation-state. Yet, like food sovereignty, the right to be forgotten could be a capacity of humans that markets can respect if all the consumers in those markets understand themselves as holding that capacity.

The right to be forgotten is the most concrete candidate for incorporation into R-GPS before me at this writing. Perhaps the DIY movement and maker faires where people gather to show off things – from the practical such as jewelry and simple machines to more fanciful steampunk clocks and fantasy weapons – they created themselves could be incorporated into R-GPS to combat neoliberal globalism's de-emphasis of the wisdom of doing things for yourself.

The Internet becomes very important to passing this rhetoric of personal sovereignty and securing agency via the discourse itself. The audience for this grassroots globalism is just as much the grassroots as it is elites. Think of the networks of food

sovereignty people identified in Chapter 5. Much like the neoliberals had to convince themselves that they were acting in the best interests of the people they were dominating, the grassroots has to convince itself that there is something they can claim that offers some balance of agency under a neoliberal umbrella. This circulating discourse is a key vehicle for that constitutional function.

As a theory, R-GPS could contribute to furthering some of the scholarship of globalization as it provides a mechanism for understanding the workings of other theories. For instance, it fleshes out Hardt & Negri's (2004) work on the *multitude* reviewed in Chapter 2. Recall that Hardt & Negri's model of an empire of capital (*Empire* 2000) necessarily produces a multitude of workers spread round the globe (*Multitude* 2004) through their communicative work in producing and processing knowledge, immaterial labor that capital needs. The danger, however, for the empire of capital is that by using the apparatus of global communications, workers begin self-organizing to create their own terms of engagement with capital and with global conditions (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 207). Hardt & Negri drew heavily on the analogy to open source software programming models in which intellectual property is not owned by any individual and all programmers contribute their ideas for the betterment of a community of programmers (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 340). The multitude exercises power through an organic decision-making ability and the "constant legitimate possibility of disobedience" to the empire (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 340).

If neoliberal globalism provides an organizing discourse for the empire in this formulation, it is reasonable to wonder what discourse provides the equivalent connective

tissue and rhetorical resources to accomplish the potential the theorists invest in the multitude. R-GPS answers that question.

Table 1: Hardt & Negri's Theoretical Model, Plus Organizing Discourses

| H&N Model | Organizing Discourse |
|---|---|
| Empire | Neoliberal Globalism |
| Multitude | Rhetoric of Global Personal Sovereignty |

R-GPS provides a means for completing a discursive understanding of Hardt & Negri's Empire/Multitude model. This discursive aspect addresses some of the shortcomings of *Multitude* (2004) I noted in Chapter 2, such as its inability to explain how the multitude comes into being and/or creates the common, a key construct in the theorists' model.

> Agricultural labor, industrial labor, and immaterial labor...along with the productive social activity of the poor, are taking increasingly common characteristics. This becoming common presents the possibility of not only the equality of the various forms of labor but also their free exchange and communication. Producing in common presents the possibility of the production of the common, which is itself a condition of the creation of the multitude (Hardt & Negri 2004 p. 338).

The common is so obviously a discursive construct that Hardt & Negri feel free to gloss over that fact. For everyone involved in all forms of labor to reach solidarity as one body requires that they develop and share a discourse that constructs and maintains that solidarity. That discursive need can only be amplified for that body to then progress to the decision-making capacity of the multitude as it juxtaposes itself against an empire of capital. R-GPS provides a rhetorical means for the production of the common among all categories of labor, from the physical to intellectual labor, through the struggle with the empire of capital and the trading of symbols via the Internet (Hardt & Negri 2004 pp. 206-207). R-GPS steps forward as a means of bringing people into the networked society or the multitude.

Likewise, R-GPS provides a lens for applying Appadurai's (1996) construct of the ideoscape, "composed of elements of the Enlightenment worldview, which consist of a chain of ideas, terms, and images" and the spread of those values around the globe in a post-colonial social organization (Appadurai 1996 p. 36). Recall from Chapter 2 that Appadurai adapted the idea of a landscape – a broad tableau with its various features that are both singular and interactive – to provide a set of lenses for understanding regions and cultural diaspora: mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes (Appadurai 1996 p. 33). The ideoscape is a construct that enables scholars to assess the ideas flowing within a region or culture that is influenced by global flows of ideas, culture and power. Given the ubiquity of neoliberal globalism, that form of globalism from above is no doubt present in any study. R-GPS could be a tool for assessing the grassroots reaction to neoliberal globalism within a community, region or culture under

study. By assessing the theory of rights or the trading of discursive units such as *food sovereignty* within a local ideoscape, scholars could address questions of the degree to which the community under study considers itself possessing agency or is energized by an alternative to neoliberalism or is networked with other localities.

These are just two established areas of scholarship where R-GPS and Rhetoric as a discipline could make a contribution to the understanding of what is happening in the world. There is much work yet to do. Food talk provided a point of departure for a larger project.

**Attitudes Toward the Present: Continuing this Project**

Food talk provided a corpus of texts for this project's analysis of globalism. Food is an intersection point for many forces of industry, culture, structures and everyday human needs. Even so, this project is about more than food.

The discursive transitions that Burke charted[25] took centuries to occur in ways that could only be seen looking backward. Today, discourse moves on Internet time. Neoliberal globalism incubated for a few decades until it burst into the mainstream in the 1980s and 1990s with declarations from Margaret Thatcher and others that "there is no alternative" propelling it forward. Today, an alternative is developing and spreading via the Internet. This dissertation cannot predict its trajectory, whether this theory of rights and R-GPS can rebalance the global discursive environment has yet to be seen.

[25] These transitions include: Christian Evangelism, Medieval Synthesis, Protestant Transition, Naive Capitalism, and Emergent Collectivism.

Even so, the identification of an alternative globalism – one that is growing from the grassroots – suggests change could be approaching. The very idea that neoliberalism could reach a Malthusian limit is, no doubt, far-fetched to some. Burke might argue in response that the medieval serf knew no alternative to his or her world of allegiance to feudal and papal authority. Yet, that equipment for living had a finite life.

Suggesting that Burke's notion of discursive waxing and waning applies to neoliberal globalism should not be confused with predicting the collapse of capitalism. Even so, a discursive battle is engaged over how we organize society on a global level through global communications technology and the grassroots discursive environment built on it.

As a crude metaphor, this chapter's title "Rumbling from Below" comes from an article in *The Economist* (February 9, 2013) about life in North Korean society. The article argues that North Korea is changing socially. The changes are engineered from below against the iron-clad regime from above. "While the Kim family dynasty, now in its third generation, seems almost immutable, the country that it rules over has altered dramatically. Instead of relying on state patronage for survival, people now hustle to make ends meet…" (*The Economist*, "Rumblings from below" February 9, 2013 p. 24). The changes are engineered from below by youth and digital media technologies (e.g. smuggled flash drives, illicit downloads, hackers reaching outside the nation) that are creating transnational network connections. Even as the larger world focuses on what the regime is doing with nuclear tests and missiles, it might be more important that Jeon Geum is talking on her Hello Kitty mobile phone hoping to get home to watch American

TV shows smuggled into the country on flash drives (*The Economist*, "Rumblings from below" February 9, 2013 p. 24). Like those talking about where their food came from and who should decide what to plant where, Ms. Geum is talking about a form of agency that is changing her world.

## Glossary

*Globalization*: Throughout this project, I use *globalization* to denote a complex of forces that have played out through history. Those forces range from transportation to communications technology to capital flows and migration and well beyond.

*Globalism*: Throughout this project, I use *globalism* to denote rhetorical claims on the social organization of the world that gather adherents to the point of emerging as a transcontinental mode of discourse. This definition builds on Joseph Nye's (2002) use of the term as something that "seeks to describe and explain nothing more than a world which is characterized by networks of connections that span multi-continental distances" (Nye 2002).[26] In the current project, globalism is a discourse that simultaneously explains the world and shapes it to fit that explanation.

*Globalism from Above*: Globalism is most often understood as something wielded instrumentally – from above. That is to say, globalism is often wielded by elites, institutions (e.g. The World Bank, The International Monetary Fund, United Nations, multi-national corporations) and other sources of power to arrange the goals and rules of engagement on this new playing field. In a complex world, more than one flavor of globalism should be possible. Globalism from above enjoys advantages in imposing its tenets on individuals and other organizations owing to the elite control of

[26] Nye has written extensively on globalization as the former head of Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. This particular quote can be found at http://www.theglobalist.com/globalism-versus-globalization/.

communications channels and productive resources rather than any real debate about how to conceptualize and construct this one world.

*Neoliberalism*: Extensively explored in Chapter 2, *neoliberalism* is a currently dominant form of globalism from above. It emphasizes free markets on a global basis with all local resources assimilated into that market of free-flowing goods, services, capital and labor. It is what David Harvey called a "hegemonic…mode of discourse" promoting the ideology that "the social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach of market transactions, and [which] seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market" (Harvey, 2005 p. 3).

*Globalism from below*: Throughout this project, *globalism from below* denotes a grassroots-driven discourse organizing the social world on a global basis. This construct is not so widely recognized as either globalism from above or neoliberalism; but it can be glimpsed in such movements as the Occupy Wall Street and Slow Food movements. The crux of this project is to test the existence of such a discourse or establish some of its potential building blocks in the face of neoliberalism's hegemonic power.

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# Vita

John Robert Thompson grew up in the rural Midwestern US during the 1960s and 1970s, earning his bachelor's degree in journalism from Northern Illinois University in 1984. At that time, he made a promise that he would one day return to academia and pursue a Ph.D. Many years and miles later he began graduate studies in Rhetoric at the University of Texas at Austin. Thompson's research interests include the rhetoric of political economy, popular culture, the public sphere and global civil society.

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